THE

1963 CHRISTMAS NUMBER 5/-

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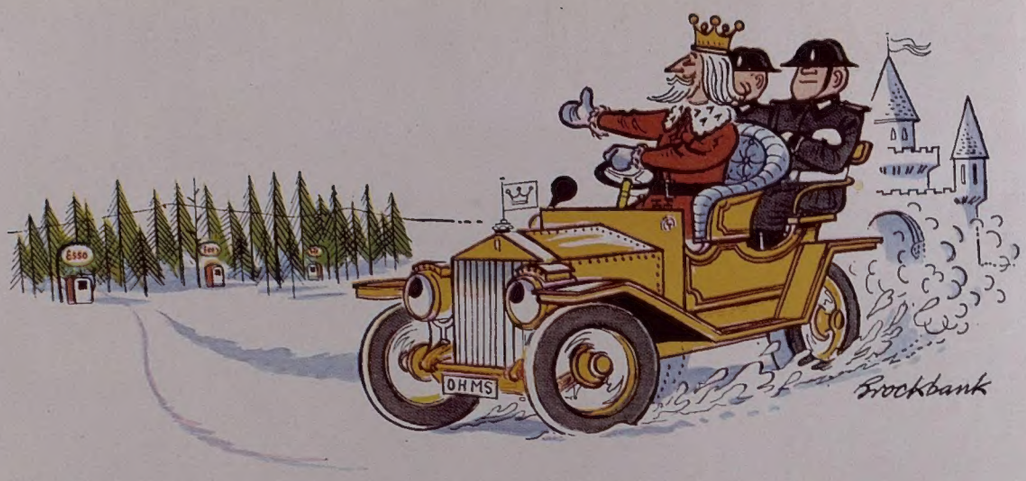

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THE 1963 CHRISTMAS NUMBER

SPHERE

with which are incorporated *"The Graphic"* and *"Black and White"*

Vol. CCLV No. 3309A

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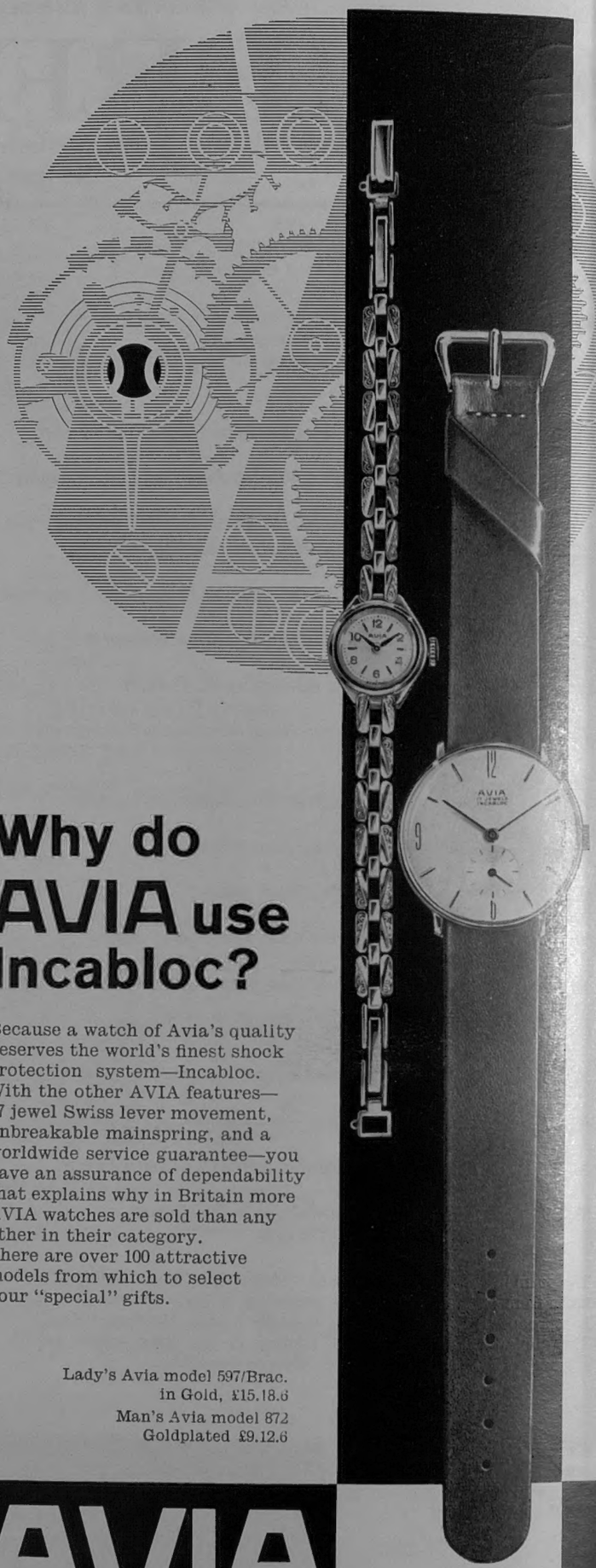

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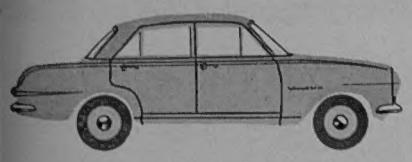

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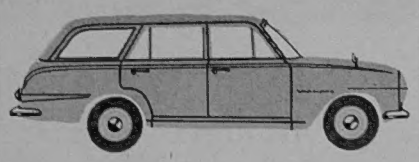

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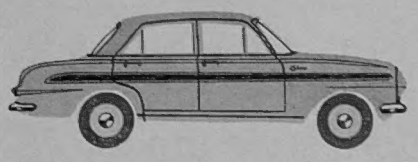

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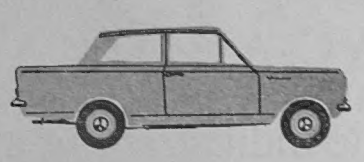

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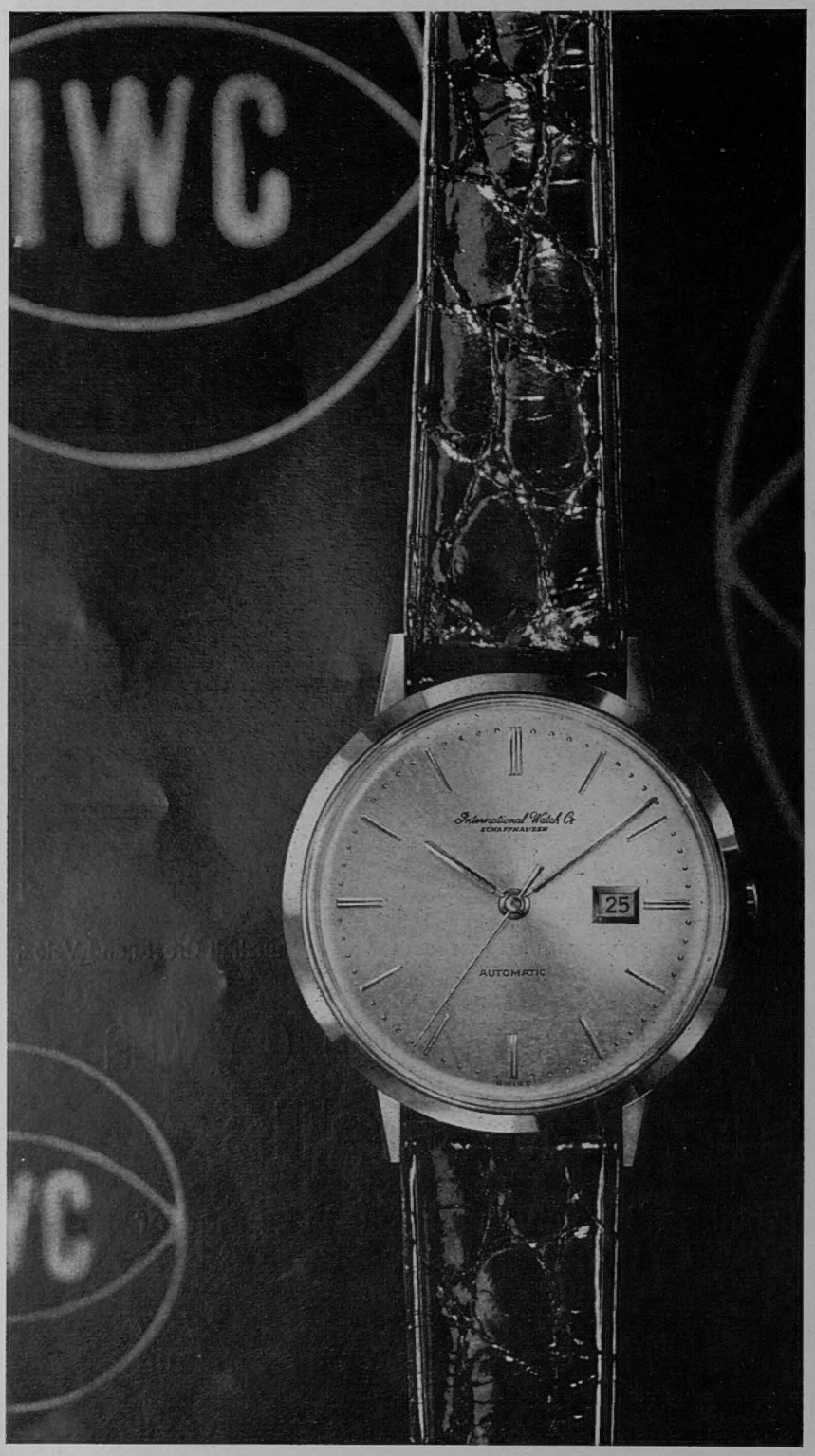

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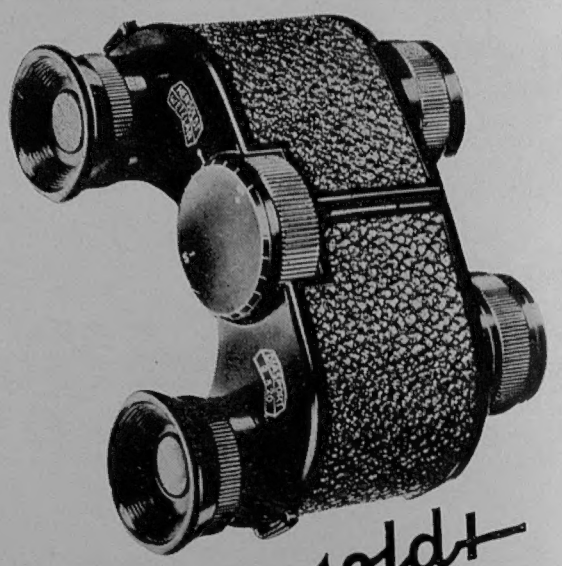

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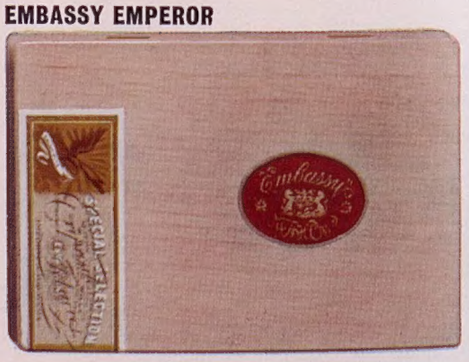

CHRISTMAS CIGARS FROM WILLS

from the oil painting by Montague Dawson

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LONDON RECTORIES —*drawings by Geoffrey S. Fletcher*

The Rectory in Helmet Row of St. Luke's, Old Street, in Finsbury

A number of rectories of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries survive in the City of London and in the contiguous former "villages" such as Stepney. There are also some modern rectories, usually replicas of previous buildings destroyed in the war.

St. Luke's, Old Street, is in Finsbury and was designed by George Dance, the Elder, the architect of the Mansion House. Consecrated in 1733, it is now closed owing to subsidence. But in nearby Helmet Row, the Rectory is still lived in. This building dates from 1774.

At St. Sepulchre-without-Newgate, in the City, the Rectory is a copy of the old Watch House which was destroyed by German bombs in 1941. Its rebuilding by Seely and Paget was completed this year. The Watch House was originally built as an observation post against the "resurrection men" who raided the graves in the churchyard and sold the corpses to surgeons in the nearby tavern, "The Fortune of War." The bust on the wall is of Elia. Other associations with Lamb in the drawing include the iron gate from another City church, Christ Church, Grey Friars.

St. Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe has a charming eighteenth-century building for its rector on St. Andrew's Hill. A notable feature is the fine late eighteenth-century door. The house is now the residence of the rector of St. Mary Woolnoth.

A new building which is part of a magnificent restoration by Mr. S. Dykes Bower is the Rectory of St. Vedast, Foster Lane. However, the gallery seen in the drawing is old. A delightful East End square is Nichol's Square in Stepney, now unfortunately being demolished. The demolition will not affect the Church of St. Chad or its rectory. They were erected in 1868 by James Brooks, an accomplished Gothic Revival architect who did a considerable amount of work in East End parishes.

On the other side of the river, St. Mary Rotherhithe is of especial interest to Americans. Several members of the crew of the *Mayflower*, which was built in nearby shipyards, are buried in the churchyard. The rectory, remodelled in the nineteenth century, adjoins an eighteenth-century schoolhouse.

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Left: The Watch House is the Rectory of the Church of St. Sepulchre-without-Newgate

Below, left: The courtyard of the Rectory and part of the Church of St. Vedast, Foster Lane

Below: The Rectory of St. Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe on St. Andrew's Hill is the house of the rector of St. Mary Woolnoth

LONDON RECTORIES

(continued)

Right: Rectory and Church of St. Chad, Nichol's Square, in Stepney

Below: Next to the Rectory of the Parish Church of St. Mary, Rotherhithe, is the former Schoolhouse

Party without people

A story for Christmas by John Nield, illustrated by Edward Ardizzone

Hullo, old chap, so there you are. Come on in. Nice to see you. Give me your coat. Still snowing, eh? Come on, this way.

Now what are you going to have? Good. I think I'll join you. Now tell me, how are things.

What's that. No, there's no mistake. Yes, this is the night of the party. No, I wouldn't say you were too early; no, you're not exactly late either. Where are the others? That's a good question. You see there aren't any others, only you and I.

I'd better tell you about it. You're bound to hear from someone or other.

You see the party was going fine, until we came to my grandfather's Christmas ghost story. You've met my grandfather, haven't you. He usually drops in at these parties. Fine, big old boy, over six foot, weighs sixteen stone, tremendous great voice.

And he loves telling his old ghost story. Yes, it's always the same one. He claims it's true, happened to him when he was a young chap. No one's ever questioned it before until this chap Higgins or Stiggins to-night. I'm not sure of the blighter's name. I didn't invite him. Someone brought him.

To-night after the first high jinks had worn off grandfather got everybody round him and went into his piece. He was in fine form and soon had everybody hanging on his words. He sort of fixes you with his eye at the dramatic bits, and the girls squeal and grab the nearest man.

In the days when grandfather was a young chap things went very well for his type. He spent all the summer playing cricket as an amateur and all the winter going from house party to house party. He was very popular; a good solid type, not too clever, but always said and did exactly what you expected him to. Men liked him and dogs and women adored him.

The peak of the winter season was the Christmas house party and that particular year grandfather had gone to Cumberland to the ancestral house of a fellow he'd been up at Oxford with. It was a lovely old place in a particularly beautiful and secluded stretch of country.

Grandfather got there Christmas eve and from then until Twelfth Night there was continuous revelry. Nobody ever stopped eating or drinking; excepting, of course, everything finished sharp at midnight on the Saturday and you were expected to turn up stone sober for church parade on the Sunday and everybody managed it somehow or other; as grandfather said with a critical eye on the assembled company, they were men in those days.

Twelfth Night as usual finished with a fancy dress ball and it went off at a cracking pace with grandfather and his coat-tails flying about in a succession of polkas and galops and schottisches and a monumental set of lancers until just about midnight even grandfather began to feel he'd like to put his feet up for a bit before coming back into the fray like a lion refreshed. Talking about refreshed, I'm not saying the old boy hadn't had a few in the course of the evening, but it had nothing to do with what followed, so he says.

Anyway he went across the hall to the library. It was empty. There was a log fire burning. Grandfather sat down in a chair before it and closed his eyes for a bit. There was only one green-shaded oil lamp on a table in the corner and it was all very quiet and subdued.

Presently something disturbed him and he saw a chap crossing the room towards him, and my grandfather thought there was something odd about him which he couldn't quite place. Then he realised what it was. He could see right through this fellow. Grandfather was all for making a bolt for it, but he couldn't seem to remember where he'd left his legs. That woke him up properly and he saw what it was.

The flames from the logs were jumping up and down and sending flashes of light from the polished panelling of the walls and the old gentleman coming towards him had a row of polished brass buttons down his waistcoat and the light flashing from those made it seem as though it were coming from the polished wood behind him and made it look as though you were seeing right through him. Grandfather said he gave the idea afterwards to that chap Maskelyn who worked it into one of his tricks.

The old gentleman came right up and sat down on a chair the other side of the fire. He was in fancy dress, of course, knee breeches, long waistcoat, cut-away coat and all that toggery of several generations before. He stretched out his legs, rubbed his calves with his hands and groaned. He had one of those ruefully comical faces where you're never sure whether the chap is really dismal or having a whale of a good time in his own doleful way.

Grandfather gave him a friendly nod and said encouragingly:

"Tough going, eh?"

"Indeed," said the old gentleman, "as you say—tough going. And I'm not so young as I was."

"Do you know," said grandfather on an impulse, "you'll laugh at this, but when you came in I had the queerest notion. For a moment I thought you were a ghost."

"My dear chap," said the old gentleman, stopping his rubbing and staring, "Whatever gave you that extraordinary notion?"

And putting up his hands he took off his head and sat with it on his lap with his arms folded above it.

That time grandfather did get to his feet, until he saw it wasn't the old gentleman's head at all; it was one of those full round-bottomed wigs he'd been wearing and he'd just taken that off and now the firelight shone on his bald pate.

So grandfather sat down again and began to think that perhaps he had been hitting the bottle harder than he had realised and that he'd better pull himself together, so to show

"Grandfather was all for making a bolt for it."

Party without people

continued page 19

he could he sat and chatted of this and that to the old gentleman who just sat nodding at him in his quaint way.

"Well, I suppose we'd better be getting back," said grandfather presently, "or they'll be missing us," and he got to his feet. "Are you coming?"

"No," said the old gentleman placidly, getting to his feet. "I think I'll go this way," and he marched up to the blank wall by the side of the fireplace and went right through it and vanished.

Grandfather was standing there, not unnaturally a bit taken aback, when the door opened and another old gentleman came in. He was about the same height as the first old gentleman but was fat and chubby with a beaming smile. He looked rather like Mr. Pickwick, and in fact was dressed like Mr. Pickwick too.

"Excuse me," said the fat cheerful little gentleman, warming himself in front of the fire, "Don't want to be personal and all that, but you look as if you'd just seen a ghost."

"Well, believe it or not," said grandfather, "but I'm not so sure I haven't."

"Oh, my dear fellow," exclaimed the fat jolly little gentleman.

"I know," said grandfather, "but there was this chap in here with me. Sat in that chair there. I talked to him for quite a bit. Ordinary sort of chap like you. But when we got up to go he walked through that wall and just vanished."

"What sort of a chap was he," said the chubby little gentleman, suddenly serious.

"Oh, about your height and build, but a lot thinner if you'll excuse me, sir. He'd got a dismal sort of face in a funny way. The sort of chap who enjoys his own little jokes deep down."

"Good Heavens," said the stout little party, "Egbert."

"Egbert," repeated grandfather.

"My brother, Egbert. Now isn't that just like Egbert. My dear chap he's no more of a ghost than I am, I can assure you. You say he went out through the wall."

"Yes, that blank bit there by the fireplace."

The fat little gentleman went across and examined it, and tapped it with his knuckles and came back beaming.

"Of course," he said, chuckling, "I'd forgotten, but now I remember. Really it was too bad of Egbert, scaring you like that, but he does like his little joke. You see that isn't a solid wall at all. There's a panel there, it works on springs or something, I'm no good at mechanical things, but if you go up to it and press it, it flies open and you go through and it shoots back into place behind you. It works so quickly it makes it look as though you've gone through the wall itself. Look, I'll show you."

And the fat cheerful old gentleman hopped over to the wall by the fireplace and he too vanished.

Grandfather waited a bit and then said nervously, "I say, sir, are you there?"

"But of course I am," said the fat old gentleman re-appearing. "My dear chap there's nothing to it, I do assure you. Here, I tell you what, you try it yourself."

"What do I have to do," asked grandfather.

"Well, the most effective way," said the chubby little gentleman reflectively, "is to stand well back, take a run and go at it head first. You really do go out like a light then."

"I suppose," said grandfather looking down dubiously at the little gentleman, "it'll be big enough for me."

"The most appalling crash against the wall"

"Oh yes," said the other, "plenty of room inside. Plenty of room inside. Now come along. I should start from here. Head down, that's it. Now then, alley-oop. Charge."

And grandfather went rushing across and went the most appalling crash against the wall and laid himself out.

And just before he blacked out completely he had a glimpse of the two old gentlemen, the dismal one and the fat cheerful one, standing side by side and looking down at him and laughing like a couple of drains.

When grandfather came to he was stretched out on a couch and his host was dabbing at his head with something wet and vinegary and his hostess was flapping a large ostrich fan about.

"What on earth happened," said his host, "someone went into the library and found you stretched out cold in front of the fireplace."

"You'll never believe this," said grandfather, sitting up with an effort and a groan, "but first of all there was this old boy who walked through the wall over there and vanished. At least I thought he had, and then there was this other old gentleman, a cheerful fat little chap, and he came in and he seemed to know all about it and said it was a trick panel or something and he proved it by going through it himself. Then he persuaded me to have a go, but I didn't go through. I just laid myself out."

His host and his host's wife exchanged glances.

"I might have known it," said his host bitterly, "Egbert and Gilbert. They're up to their old tricks again."

"After all their promises," said his wife tartly.

"Egbert and Gilbert," said my grandfather still a bit dazed.

"They're brothers," said his host, "and a distant connection of mine. Oh, they're not bad chaps really but they have this mania for practical joking. They drove all their own friends away acting the fool and now they've started to do the same with mine."

"Don't feel too badly about it," said grandfather good-naturedly. "A joke's a joke, I suppose, and if they enjoyed it, fair enough. I've a fairly thick skull and I don't suppose I've come to any lasting harm."

"But that's not the point," said his host irritably, he wasn't one of the larky sort himself. "Look what they did to the Bishop when he stayed here. And he thought it was me—the Vicar's senior churchwarden."

"And what about the dowager Duchess of Dumpshire," said his wife, stopping her mourning and looking at grandfather above rather—if one can use so ungallant a simile like a cow above a hedge.

"*You* got the blame for that," said her husband gloomily, "and you'll never convince the dowager otherwise. I've had about all I can stand of these chaps and their silly jokes. You'd have thought their own end might have been a lesson to them."

"Their end," said grandfather.

"It seems," said his host, "they were filling a chap's riding boots with gunpowder when it went off and killed the pair of them."

"Then," said grandfather, "what are they?"

"Oh, they're ghosts all right," said his host impatiently, "but they're cheerful sort of fellows and they like dropping in at these parties, and nobody minds. You see they look perfectly normal and nobody ever notices anything. I don't begrudge them their fun, but this practical joking, no, I'm not putting up with that any more."

And he got to his feet, straightened his tie, smoothed his hair, buttoned up his coat, marched solemnly across to the fireplace and rapped on the wall.

"Egbert, Gilbert," he called, "are you there? Now listen to what I say, for this is your last warning. The next time you play any of your foolish pranks on anybody I shall not merely forbid you the place, but I shall sell the place itself and I shall take care to sell it to people who won't have the sort of country house parties you are accustomed to, and then where will you be? Now take heed for I shall give you no further warning."

And he sat down in a chair, put his hand in front of his coat and gazed severely at the wall like a hanging judge and there was an uncomfortable silence.

"'You weren't by any chance calling me a liar,' roared grandfather."

And my grandfather said he had an impression that he saw the couple of old gentlemen standing there, very crestfallen, and he felt quite bad about it.

Of course he promised his host not to say anything about it to anyone and would probably have forgotten all about it if by sheer chance a few months later he hadn't come face to face with his host striding down Piccadilly.

"What are you doing here?" said my grandfather after they had shaken hands. He noticed how grim and determined the chap was looking at that moment.

"I have come," announced the other tragically, "to put Lushington Hall up for sale."

You don't tell me," said my grandfather, "not Egbert and Gilbert again."

"I'm afraid so," said his host brokenly.

There, amidst the jostling crowds, and the clop-clopping of the hansoms they gazed at each other in silent sorrow.

"You'd have thought," burst out the other eventually, "that even they would have had more sense than to do that to Her. Lord knows I'd been angling for that visit for years. My wife had set her heart on a governor-generalship—for me, of course. Practically within our grasp, I do assure you. To think—" he said, dodging a fish porter and his load, "that at this moment we might have been lording it over the Blessed Isles. Except for those idiots and what they did. To Her, of all people. And she wasn't amused. She said so. 'We are not amused,' she said, 'we are not amused.' I mean, you could see that. And all those Sikhs fumbling at those swords of theirs. Not to mention what that great bear of a John Brown said to me afterwards. Most insulting—most insulting—if only I'd understood it. But it's finished Egbert and Gilbert. Up goes the place and as I told them, I'll see it goes to people who even Egbert and Gilbert won't want to play jokes with."

And off he went.

"And," concluded grandfather impressively, "that is why that beautiful English country home is now the regional headquarters of the National Coal Board."

That was the pay-off line, of course, and usually it got a big laugh. In fact it did tonight, because the old boy was in good form, but when the applause died down this fellow Higgins or Stiggins coughed and said:

"I say, sir."

"Well," said grandfather, going a bit red about the gills, sensing trouble.

"Nothing, sir," said this chap Higgins or Stiggins. He was one of these probing types, with a sharp nose and no chin, "but you say this happened when you were a young man."

"Yes," said grandfather, "what about it."

"About the eighteen-eighties or so," murmured Higgins or Stiggins.

"I suppose so," said grandfather, "although I don't know why we need dwell on it."

"But the National Coal Board was not formed until the nineteen forties," said Stiggins or Higgins, sitting back triumphantly.

"Well, what of it," said grandfather bristling, "I had nothing to do with the formation of the National Coal Board. At least nobody can blame that on to me."

"No, no," said Higgins or Stiggins, "I just meant—well, it seems a long time he was getting rid of the place."

"What of it," said grandfather going purple, "he was a decent sort of chap at heart. He had to give Egbert and Gilbert reasonable time to get themselves fixed up somewhere else. Not easy for chaps like that to get fixed up. In fact in the end I myself got them in somewhere. Not that it's any business of yours, is it?"

"No, rather not, sir," said Higgins or Stiggins.

"You weren't by any chance calling me a liar, were you," roared grandfather, now thoroughly aroused.

"Oh no, certainly not," said Higgins or Stiggins, looking as if he were going to faint.

But I wasn't worried about him. It was grandfather's blood pressure I was concerned about. In fact, it was that, that finished him off in the 'twenties when that fool of a steward mistook ginger ale for scotch.

But the old boy had got the bit between his teeth.

"I'm not staying here," he bellowed, "amongst people who doubt the word of a gentleman. Egbert, Gilbert," he called and they came in from my bedroom where they had been quietly busy about something for some little time. "Let's get out of this place chaps. Come on—altogether now—Off."

And the three of them vanished in front of everybody there. Most distressing. I've never seen a party break up quicker. They just grabbed hats and coats—anybody's—and went.

So that's why you're the only guest. But don't let that worry you. We can make a night of it on our own, can't we.

But must you keep looking over your shoulder like that, old chap. You've nothing to worry about. Egbert and Gilbert are quite decent birds and grandfather's a pet.

They're always saying if they could only get me out of myself—right out of myself—what a good time the four of us could have together.

But look, if you don't feel comfortable about it, I'll tell you what we'll do. We'll pop along to the local together. You'd like that—good.

I'll just go to my bedroom and get my Wellingtons. Don't worry—just give me a light for this cigarette and I'll be right back like a bomb."

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SKATING IN THE ROYAL PARKS

With long range forecasts of some meteorologists predicting more hard winters for Britain as we enter a cold cycle, London is likely to see more scenes of skating in the parks like those of last winter. This activity is of course by no means unknown to Londoners through the centuries. These aquatints from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries show that all kinds of people went out skating then. Top right: Published in March 1787, this aquatint is entitled *Winter Amusement: A view in Hyde Park from the Sluice at the East End.* Right, in the same series, is *A view in Hyde Park from the Moated House.* Top far right is a winter landscape of skaters in St. James's Park with Buckingham Palace in the background. Entitled *Buckingham House, Middlesex, a Palace of Her Majesty,* it was published in 1817 with the inscription "To Mrs. Watts Russell of Ilam Hall, an admirer and patron of the Fine Arts, this Plate is inscribed." The photograph, below right, shows the Park from nearly the same vantage point near Buckingham Palace and shows skaters, snowballers and passers-by on January 22, 1963.

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A

Brian Vesey-Fitzgerald takes a slice of

Aunt Myfanwy's Christmas cake

WHEN MY AUNT MYFANWY died in 1929 a battered tin trunk came into my possession. It was locked and there was no key. I am sure that I meant to open it at the time, but, as always, there was no time. Certainly there was no urgency. My aunt Myfanwy was a careful spinster and anything of value would have been stored in the bank. This trunk came out of the attic of the little house in Merioneth. So it went into my attic.

Shortly afterwards I moved house and the trunk moved with me: to go once more into an attic where it remained for thirty years, wholly forgotten. I came across it again only when I moved to my present house two years ago and had to clear that attic of thirty years of clutter. I had forgotten it so thoroughly that at first I did not recognise it at all. Then I was tempted to scrap it. But there was obviously something in it, and so it came with me—to be opened when I had settled in. In the meantime it went up into the attic. For two years I have forgotten all about that trunk. It would be lying there still, forgotten, were it not that I had to make room for the belongings of a young relative posted abroad.

It took quite a time to force it open. Inside were a few articles of clothing, the sort of clothing which today you see only in museums or on Welsh girls dressed up for the benefit of camera-laden tourists: a pair of red silk stockings, so old that they crumbled in my hands; a couple of faded striped "turnovers" (small shawls which used to be worn over the shoulders and fastened in front close below the chin); an embroidered bonnet with wired brim and the remains of a lace frill; a pair of pointed dancing-slippers. There was also a "love-spoon," delicately carved but roughly broken at the shank. (I wonder what tragedy lay behind that spoon? Did Aunt Myfanwy break it herself and then, half-regretful, keep it in memory of the "might-have-been"?) Just those few things, relics maybe of a courtship. Just those few things and nothing more, save a book, bound in red leather with silvered corners and a silver clasp; Aunt Myfanwy's recipe book, prepared against the day that never came.

On the fly-leaf, in faded copper-coloured ink, it bears her name and the date 1875. And on the next page in her angular spidery handwriting, s looking like f, a note to the effect that some of the recipes are those of Grandmother Angharad. Now, this is going back quite a bit. In 1875 my Aunt Myfanwy was twenty, the eldest child of a family of ten (others died in infancy), of which my mother was the youngest. My grandmother, Gwyneth, was the youngest of a family of twelve. Great-grandmother Angharad was, you will see, born quite a while ago. Some of her recipes will, I feel sure, be traditional Welsh recipes of the eighteenth century. Unfortunately, there is, in Aunt Myfanwy's book, no indication which recipes are great-grandmother's. But the Christmas cake recipe is there. And I remember Aunt Myfanwy's Christmas cake: oh, so well.

Aunt Myfanwy always spent Christmas with us. But she also always came in June, and it was then that she made the cake. It was, as I recall, a very considerable performance with everyone (except Aunt Myfanwy, who was a born leader) running hither and thither in all directions. When it was finished, it was wrapped in layers of paper and taken down to the cellar, where it was put into a large cheese-press and pretty well hermetically sealed with great clasps which were pulled down and fastened. A little while before Christmas it was brought up again and my mother iced and decorated it. Then we did not see it again until Dydd Calan (New Year's Day), and I do not really know why we called it the Christmas cake.

I remember it well because it was an enormous flat cake. And because for years I was not given any: and was never able to filch more than a crumb. With it would appear another small, ordinary cake, with a miserable thin layer of almond paste. Aunt Myfanwy, who was small and spare, would stand up and cut the Christmas cake with a huge knife. It was quite a ceremony. The elders (including the servants, the shepherd and the farmhand, and their wives) would each get a slice and I would watch the rich dark, almost black, cake—and memory tells me that it had a faint and delicious scent—going round the table with longing eyes and moist lips.

Then I would be asked if I would have some cake and when I said, "Yes, please, Aunt Fan," she would cut a slice from the smaller cake. Of course, I protested every time and every time I received the same answer: "It is the little that tastes." Now I know there is a deep truth in that old Welsh proverb. Then I thought it a whopping lie. (But you did not create in front of Aunt Myfanwy.) Even so large a gathering as ours could not finish off that huge cake at a sitting. Yet it never appeared again. It was cut into thick wedges—yes, I am sure that it must have been a traditional recipe handed down from great-grandmother—and distributed round the family. The uncles got the biggest wedges: the aunts, even those with families, smaller ones. Aunt was convinced that her sisters-in-law could not cook and that her brothers were starving.

Mrs. Beeton, by the way, had nothing on my Aunt Myfanwy. Her recipe for Christmas cake is a poor, puny thing by comparison. You have to turn to her recipe for Bride cake to find any resemblance. The quantities, at least, are much the same. Laughable quantities now, of course: but it must be remembered

that in those days large families were the rule. But the ingredients are slightly different. Aunt Myfanwy used suet as well as butter and eggs and she was much more generous with the liquor. There is one great difference. Mrs. Beeton baked her cake: Aunt Myfanwy boiled hers.

Maybe you have a large family? Or run a café or something? Here is the recipe:

> 3 lb. flour, 1 lb. beef suet, 3 lb. fresh butter, 24 eggs, 7½ lb. currants, 3 lb. brown sugar, 2 grated nutmegs, two grated carrots, grated rind of one lemon, two crushed apples, twelve crushed hazel nuts, 2 gills brandy. Mix thoroughly and boil. When in press add one wineglass of Portugal wine. Keep for six months.

Unfortunately, she does not say how long you should boil. I am no cook, but I should guess it would be pretty expensive on gas.

Reading that recipe, I think I know why, as a small boy, I was not allowed a slice. Aunt Myfanwy was a convinced teetotaller (she ate her cake all the same!) and I feel sure that she did not allow me a slice because she was afraid that it would place my feet on the path to perdition.

But I did get a slice in the end. I believe I was twelve at the time. On New Year's Eve there was some sort of small family argument: my mother saying one thing, Aunt Myfanwy another. I chirped up on my mother's side. Aunt Myfanwy told me to be quiet, adding that she was much older than I was and, therefore, knew better. I said (and I can quote verbatim because the remark went round the family, Aunt Myfanwy being generally held in awe): "But that's just it, Aunt Fan. You're so old, you've forgotten." There was a horrified silence. Then she laughed. The next day—my feet evidently on the path anyway—I was given a slice of the cake. I remember I thought it horrible.

Now that I have found the recipe, I suppose that we ought to eat it again. But: well, there are only the two of us. If we do not invite the whole neighbourhood in, what do we do about the quantities? It occurs to me that it may not be just a matter of simple division. I think it would be simpler, and certainly less indigestible, to stick to the wineglass of Portugal wine and the two gills of brandy. At Christmas as well as the New Year, of course.

Drawings by Geoffrey S. Fletcher

"The last order that we heard given was 'Fix bayonets, men, and die like English soldiers do,' and they did." Extract from a letter from a British survivor of the massacre at Isandhlwana in Natal by the Zulus of Cetewayo's Army on January 22, 1879. This is a detail of a steel engraving from *The Graphic*

VOICE OF THE EMPIRE BUILDERS

written by Jolyon Wimhurst

There's a breathless hush in the Close tonight—
Ten to make and the match to win—
A bumping pitch and a blinding light,
An hour to play and the last man in.
And it's not for the sake of a ribboned coat,
Or the selfish hope of a season's fame,
But his captain's hand on his shoulder smote—
"Play up! Play up! and play the game!"

The sand of the desert is sodden and red—
Red with the wreck of a square that broke;—
The Gatling's jammed and the Colonel's dead,
And the regiment's blind with dust and smoke.
The river of death has brimmed his banks,
And England's far, and Honour a name,
But the voice of a schoolboy rallied the ranks
"Play up! Play up! and play the game!"

This is the word that year by year,
While in her place the School is set,
Everyone of her sons must hear,
And none that hears it dare forget.
This they all with a joyful mind
Bear through life like a torch in flame,
And falling fling to the host behind—
"Play up! Play up! and play the game!"

This poem, written by Sir Henry Newbolt in the early years of this century, was for long after its publication vastly popular. Its subject, and its popularity, form the basis of this story. It is now fashionable to deride the concept of Empire and particularly to deride those who built the British Empire. Much of this is due to the swing in popular feeling. But perhaps the dominant reason is that the key period when Imperialism was both an inspiration to poets and an object of public esteem—roughly say from 1870 to 1914—also saw the immense popular fervour of Jingoism sweep through Britain.

Two concepts were linked together. One was that the public school morality, based on the idea that duty was a privilege, became as well the ethic behind the selfless service of many Englishmen abroad, building the Empire. The other was that the Empire owed its existence to the power of the British Navy and the British Army. The Army had recovered from the disasters of the Crimea. Although parts of it had seen almost continual service, it was against peoples who could summon up huge armies but no modern weapons. It was not until the Boer War, launched on a floodtide of jingoism, that the Army met another setback. Meanwhile the Navy had sailed serenely on—and in the first decade of this century, under Jackie Fisher, had emerged even more awesomely powerful.

But the impetus which was given to the poets stemmed from the public school tradition. It was this which made their verse Imperial rather than patriotic. Newbolt's poem is a classic example. The important decade was that of 1860-70. During this time, the public school system was rationalised with the Clarendon Commission, the Public School Act and the founding of the Headmasters' Conference. It is notable that this was also the decade of reforms in the Army and the Civil Service. It can be said, as a sweeping generalisation, that the public school married the ideas of the traditional landed gentry with the fervour of the rising middle classes. Character-building was the key to the system, more often than not through the delegation of responsibility through the prefectorial method, buttressed by a complicated pattern of privileges.

The public school aimed at creating leaders, destined for public service, at home in the Civil

The return march from one of the interminable Afghan campaigns—"a 40-pounder in a quicksand." Reproduced from *The Graphic* of August 16, 1879.

Service, or abroad in the growing bureaucracies. Scholastically the public schools paid paramount attention to the classics, to the idea of Roman Law, to placing duty to country and Empire above that of family. It was a team loyalty, a loyalty to the good games player, a loyalty to the idea of leadership and command—"But the voice of a schoolboy rallied the ranks."

The ideal leader was described by Disraeli in a sonnet about Wellington—

Thy calm mien
Recalls old Rome, as much as thy high deed;
Duty thine only idol, and serene
When all are troubled; in the utmost need
Prescient; thy country's servant ever seen,
Yet sovereign of thyself, whate'er may speed.

And Henley in turn expressed the duty of Britain in a poem entitled England my England—

They call you proud and hard,
England, my England;
You with worlds to watch and ward,
England my own;
You whose mail'd hands keep the keys
Of such teeming destinies. . . .

The part of that Empire which had perhaps the proudest traditions of service was India. Through the East India Company, these traditions had been carefully nurtured. And in Haileybury, it had a College devoted to training young men for that service, until it was closed, as such, in 1857, when the new system of appointing people to the Civil Service by competitive examination was introduced. The best description of life at Haileybury is in a book written by an Indian Civil Servant, John Beames, who was there in the last years of the old regime. Apparently modelled closely on the Oxford-Cambridge tradition, life wasn't hard—

"At ten, the first bell rang for lectures, which lasted till twelve on some days and till one on others. Stephen Austin and Simpson, two booksellers from Hertford, had stalls in the ante-rooms to the classrooms where they sold stationery and the textbooks in the various subjects. They also did a considerable business in cribs. These were translations of the textbooks in Greek, Sanskrit, Persian or any other language, printed in small type on thin paper so as to be slipped in between the pages of the textbook in the classroom. . . .

"As soon as lectures were over there was a rush to our rooms where cap and gown were carefully hidden (for it was a law of the place that if you lost your own gown you might take anyone else's) and each man put on the costume appropriate to his special form of amusement. The cricketing, rowing and football men appeared in flannels of gorgeous hues, the fast men in rather too gaudy London costumes, and so on. . . ."

After they had passed out from Haileybury, the young men, many of them, went out to serve the rest of their lives in India. Undoubtedly the best descriptions of India and the British serving there were written by Rudyard Kipling. He is the writer who became first the apostle of the Empire, then of Imperialism, and finally expressed the bitter disillusion which followed. Born in 1865, Kipling had a long career, which reached a middle point in high popularity and critical esteem, and then suffered an eclipse which has lasted since his death in 1936. Nevertheless his poems, stories and novels—especially *Stalky and Co.* and *Kim*—have remained standard reading in many homes.

His life crystallised the facets of Imperialism. He was born in India, the son of an English art scholar, who became curator of the museum at Lahore. A swarthy boy, with lank hair, he might have passed for a Hindustani and indeed until the age of six he spoke and thought in Hindustani. When he was six, he and his sister, aged three and a half, were sent home to be looked after by a relative, who was apparently a religious, domestic tyrant of the most repressively Victorian kind. Kipling was so unhappy that he had a nervous breakdown and eventually his mother came home from India to take her son away. At eleven, he went to an English public school, the United Services College at Westwood Ho! He was there 4½ years and out of his experiences wrote *Stalky and Co.* Literary critics have since passionately argued whether Kipling gave an accurate picture of the bullying, beating and fagging system of the school—certainly his childhood experiences made him acutely morbid and suspicious.

In 1882, Kipling left to go back to India, already remarkably mature. He found himself responding to India in a very deep way, talking remembered Hindustani without knowing what it meant. He became the sole assistant to the editor of a newspaper in Lahore. Deciding he wanted to be a writer, he wrote some short stories—*Plain Tales from the Hills*—and a book of verse. At this time, Kipling uniquely sympathised with both sides of Indian life and moved through all the classes of British society—"Having no position to consider and my trade enforcing it, I could move at will in the fourth dimension. I came to realise the bare horrors of the private's life, and the unnecessary torments he endured.... Lord Roberts, at that time Commander-in-Chief in India, who knew my people, was interested in the men, and—I had by then written one or two stories about soldiers—the proudest moment of my young life was when I rode up Simla Mall beside him on his usual explosive red Arab, while he asked me what the men thought about their accommodation, entertainment-rooms, and the like. I told him, and he thanked me as gravely as though I had been a full Colonel." Kipling knew all sorts of people—"all the queer outside world would drop into our workshop sooner or later—say a Captain just cashiered for horrible drunkenness. . . . Or a man old enough to be my father, on the edge of tears because he had been overpassed for Honours in the *Gazette*. . . . One met men going up and down the ladder in every shape of misery and success." These experiences appeared in verse or story, from Lord Roberts:

There's a little red-faced man,
Which is Bobs,
Rides the tallest 'orse 'e can—
Our Bobs . . .

to

Rustum Beg of Kolazai—slightly backward
Native State—
Lusted for a C.S.I.—so began to sanitate.
Built a Gaol and Hospital—nearly built a
City drain—
Till his faithful subjects all thought their ruler
was insane.

From India, Kipling returned to London to make his fortune as a writer. *Stalky* came out in 1899 and *Kim*, undoubtedly his best and most sympathetic book, in 1901. But before then, he had visited the United States and had lived there for four years. In fact, he was not able to stand his

VOICE OF THE EMPIRE BUILDERS

The leisurely 19th-century life in Southern India—an early morning ride—taken from *The Graphic*

Mother country for very long and in 1892 had married an American wife. At first he liked the easy-going nature of American life, not having got on with the rigid formality of English society. But there occurred a period of anti-British feeling in the U.S.—the Jameson Raid took place in 1896—and at this time Kipling returned again to England. From outside England, he had come to terms with the concepts of Imperialism.

"What do they know of England who only England know?" he wrote, echoing the cry of many a planter abroad. For the seven years after the Boer War 1900-7, Kipling spent almost half his time in South Africa. He became a great friend and admirer of Cecil Rhodes: the precepts of his celebrated poem *If* were inspired by ideas of the character of Dr. Jameson. The conflict in Kipling—between authority and his feeling for life, his early hatred of a rigid school system and his admiration for the Law brought by the English to far off places, ended here with him becoming a wholehearted convert to the popular tide of Imperialism. His marvellous craftsmanship—he was an extraordinary accomplished writer of verse and prose—was turned to the recording, a Poet Laureate of the Empire, of achievements in war.

At the same time, he came, perhaps unconsciously, to realise that the Empire, although governed by the (on the whole) admirable Law of the Public School code, was underpinned in its very foundations by the discoveries and advances of technological improvement and commercial enterprise. Rejecting people, Kipling turned to machines. He moves from the softness of those nostalgic pictures of India—

> The Injian Ocean sets an' smiles
> So soft, so bright, so bloomin' blue:
> There aren't a wave for miles an' miles
> Excep' the jiggle from the screw . . .

to the personalisation of ships or trains

> "Oh, where are you going to, all you Big Steamers,
> With England's own coal, up and down the salt seas?"
> "We are going to fetch you your bread and your butter,
> Your beef, pork, and mutton, eggs, apples, and cheese."

At the same time, Kipling seemed to have felt the first stirrings of doubts—could the Empire altogether be indentified with the Law? Was it not also a matter of power politics?

> If England was what England seems,
> An' not the England of our dreams,
> But only putty, brass an' paint,
> 'Ow-quick we'd drop her! *But she aint!*

These self-questionings form the drive behind his best poem, *The Recessional*, written in 1897. It is a call to remember the dangers of power without the Law—

> If drunk with sight of power, we loose
> Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe,
> Such boastings as the Gentiles use,
> Or lesser breeds without the Law—
> Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
> Lest we forget—lest we forget!

It is likely that the lesser breeds without the Law in fact referred not to natives but to Germans—particularly pan-Germans—who did not possess the restraints of Duty.

In 1914, Britain and her Empire went to war, proud of her power and also, making it an extraordinary event, going to war out of idealism. In that war, England's old professional army, who had so long fought on the Empire's frontiers, was wiped out, machine-gunned, gassed and buried in the slaughter of 1915. In a wave of patriotism and idealism, many of those young men who would have gone into public service, volunteered for the Army and died. Kipling's only son, not out of his teens, was killed in an attack before Loos in 1

> Our world has passed away,
> In wantonness o'erthrown.
> There is nothing left to-day
> But steel and fire and stone!

Kipling was acute enough to see that the England which came out of that cataclysmic war was his England. Something had gone that never returned. And although his poems and stories were still read, he suffered an eclipse. In Edmund Wilson's words, "The thick, dark and surly little man who had dug himself into Bateman's, ... wash, Sussex, was left to his bristling privacy.

Finally it is his portrait of India that remains in phrases and poems that have sunk deep into the national heritage—

> By the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin' eastward to the sea,
> There's a Burma girl a-settin', and I know she thinks o' me;
> For the wind is in the palm-trees, and the temple bells they say:
> "Come you back, you British soldier: come you back to Mandalay."

In its simplest, most sentimental way, that vision remained hugely popular in England up to the last war. But now in the last decade, with the Wind of Change, it has lost its grip. In this context, it is possible both to appreciate the reasons why so many English people served in lands far from their home, yearning for England yet spending so little of their lives there, and the value of their code as well as its dangers—the long hours of duty and service, and the sense of superiority in opposition to each other.

Showing the sway that life in India had over the Edwardians is a monologue—The Green Eye of the Little Yellow God. As far as can be discovered, they were composed by Milton Hayes as a spoof, but proved to be so popular that the originator, forced to take his story seriously, made his name from them.

There's a one-eyed yellow idol to the north of Khatmandu,
There's a little marble cross below the town,
There's a broken-hearted woman tends the grave of Mad Carew,
While the yellow god forever gazes down.

He was known as Mad Carew by the subs at Khatmandu,
He was hotter than they felt inclined to tell,
But for all his foolish pranks he was worshipped in the ranks,
And the Colonel's daughter smiled on him as well.

He had loved her all along with the passion of the strong
And that she returned his love was plain to all.
She was nearly 21 and arrangements were begun
To celebrate her birthday with a ball.

He wrote to ask what present she would like from Mad Carew.
They met next day as he dismissed a squad
And jokingly she made pretence that nothing else would do
But the green eye of the little yellow god . . . . . .

When the ball was at its height on that still and tropic night
She thought of him and hastened to his room.
As she crossed the barrack square she could hear the dreamy air
Of a waltz tune softly stealing thro' the gloom.

His door was open wide with silver moonlight shining through
The place was wet and slippy where she trod.
An ugly knife lay buried in the heart of Mad Carew
'Twas the vengeance of the little yellow god.

THE DOLL'S DOCTOR

This charming subject picture by the Victorian painter W. P. Frith is in the possession of Canon C. B. Mortlock and hangs in his rectory in Foster Lane, London. It was painted late in the artist's career, in 1885. By that time Frith had painted his three huge panoramas of contemporary life—Ramsgate Sands, Derby Day and the Railway Station, and he was enjoying immense popularity. He went on to live to a fine old age—he did not die until 1909 when he was 90—and he was painting until the end. Although Frith's name survives chiefly by means of those large paintings, he was an extremely prolific artist. Born in Yorkshire of humble parents, young William Frith had a narrow escape from being an auctioneer before settling into his chosen employment. In 1840, he exhibited his first work in the Royal Academy, pictures on subjects chosen from Shakespeare. From then on for many years he found his inspiration in literary subjects. In 1850, he paid a visit to Ramsgate, the result of which was an abrupt change in style and the painting Ramsgate Sands. Frith had married five years before, and had 12 children, of whom five daughters and five sons, survived their father. So he was familiar with the ways of children.

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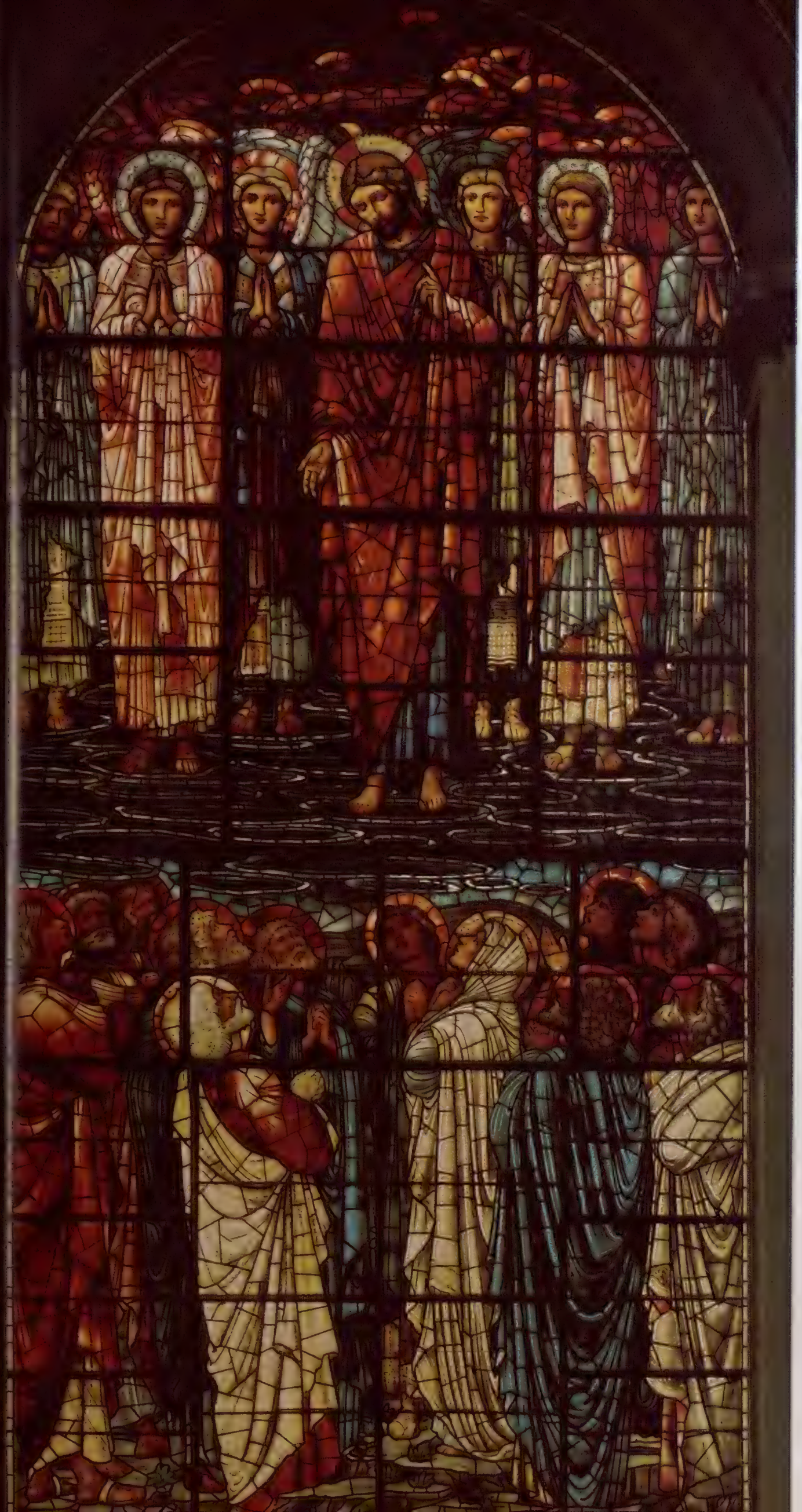
VICTORIAN GLASS

The early 18th century Cathedral Church of St. Philip in Birmingham possesses at its East End three magnificent windows designed by Sir Edward Burne-Jones and made by William Morris. Left is The Nativity, at the north-east; below, The Cr fixion, south-east; and right, The cension, central. The three were into place in the 1880's. Sir Edw Burne-Jones lived in St. Philip's pa and was baptised at the Chu



THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI French, mid 15th century. From the British Museum

WISDEN 100 NOT OUT

by Denzil Batchelor

Above: Sir Max Beerbohm's famous cartoon, a "portrait of dear old W.G."
Left: A Harry Furniss drawing of W. G. Grace from *A Century of Grace*, 1895

The song-writer declares with almost hysterical passion: "There'll always be an England while there's a country lane": but of course he is quite wrong—the proof of the immortality of England is the thriving health of *Wisden's Cricketers' Almanac*, this year celebrating its hundredth birthday. An England without *Wisden* is more unthinkable than an England without bacon and eggs for breakfast, Gilbert and Sullivan matinées, teenage delinquents, American films on television or any other national institution.

At first glance this is a paradox, because *Wisden* is primarily the historical record of a season's first-class games, and first-class cricket —the visits of touring teams excepted—is, in the opinion of many, almost as dead as the dodo. What day's county cricket can draw a crowd of 21,000: the number of copies of Wisden sold at 22s. 6d. and 25s. by the beginning of this season, with a second impression being printed for the first time in decades, and a third for the first time ever?

Apparently manhood—not only English manhood, for 10 per cent. of *Wisden's* sales come from other continents—can never tire of turning back the pages of the most satisfying bedside book in the world, till it has ascertained that on Monday, May 13, 1901, Palairet (L.C.H., not, of course, R.C.N.), made 31 for Somerset against Gloucester, on the same morning as C. M. Wells—still a member of M.C.C.—got S. H. Day l.b.w. at Lord's. The ancient oracle, is, in short, if not the Englishman's Bible, at least his version of *A la récherche du temps perdu.*

And yet not one Englishman in a thousand could tell you anything about John Wisden himself, founder of the *Almanac* a hundred years ago. He deserves to be better remembered, for he was of the type that England loves best among sporting heroes: the little man who puts the giants to the sword—of the breed of Jimmy Wilde, and "Tich" Freeman.

The illustrious umpire Bob Thoms first called him "The Little Wonder"—was he the first to boast that nickname? He was born in 1826, son of a Brighton builder, and when he first took the field he was 5 ft. 4 in. high, and—though he rectified this later—weighed but seven stone. In 12 years at his peak he averaged 225 wickets a season, and actually took 455 in 1851. He first played for Sussex in 1845, three years later being picked for the Players; while in 1852 he founded with James Dean the United All-England Eleven whose matches with the All-England Eleven (began in 1857) were the nearest things to Tests before Lillywhite took his team to Australia in 1876. The first cricket team ever to travel abroad toured Canada and the United States in 1859, two years before the first English side under H. H. Stephenson went to Australia, not then strong enough to challenge our best players.

That first touring team of all went to the New World under George Parr and Wisden. It took 15 days to cross from Liverpool, and they beat Canada at Montreal by 8 wickets, Parr's lobs claiming 16 victims. Before 25,000 spectators it defeated Twenty-Two of the United States at Hoboken by an innings and 64 runs. Even though their last match was interrupted by a heavy fall of snow, so that they fielded in great coats, mufflers and gloves, England won every game. It is satisfactory to learn that they celebrated their final victory with a particularly satisfying hot dinner and a bottle of old port.

Wisden was first and last—but not all the time—a round-arm bowler with a fine rhythmical action. *Scores and Biographies* describes him as "very fast and ripping" and it adds that bowling from the pavilion end at Lord's, when for some unexplained reason playing for the North, he clean bowled all 10 batsmen of the South, "without exaggeration his balls turned

(*Continued on page 35*)

continued from page 33

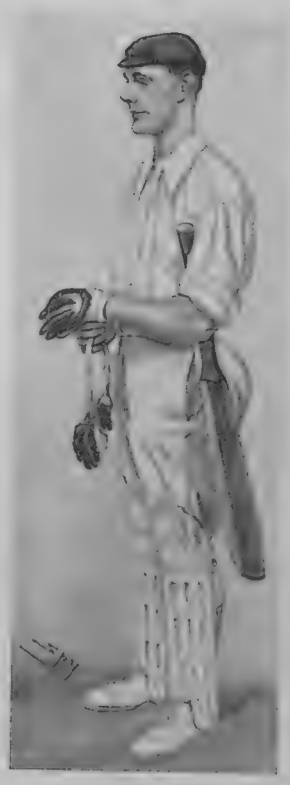
Above: Members of the first touring team of all on board ship. The team toured the United States and Canada in 1859, led by George Parr and John Wisden. From left are Carpenter, Caffyn, Lockyer, Wisden, Stephenson, G. Parr, Grundy, Caesar, Hayward and Jackson. Seated on the deck are Diver and Lillywhite

Right: Spy's cartoon of G. L. Jessop

Centre right: The team, led by the Hon. Ivo Bligh, which went out to Australia to recover the Ashes, in 1882-83. Standing, back row, are W. Barnes, F. Morley, C. T. Studd, G. F. Vernon and C. F. H. Leslie. Seated, second row, are B. G. Studd, E. F. S. Tylecote, the Hon. Ivo Bligh, A. G. Steel and W. W. Read. Foreground are R. G. Barlow and W. Bates. England won that historic series 2-1.

Top right: J. Barton King, born in Philadelphia in 1873, said to be the fastest bowler ever

Far right: T. Emmett of Yorkshire. In Yorkshire's match against Cambridge in 1869, he took 16 wickets, for 38 runs, in a day



Illustrations reproduced by courtesy of the Committee of M.C.C.

a yard from the off." If this is true and he was really fast, Wisden must have been the most remarkable bowler of his own or any day.

Sir Kenelm Digby, who knew him when he was engaged as professional at Harrow from 1852 to 1855, declared that "as a batsman he was a learner rather than a teacher." But the Rev. H. R. Biron who played for Kent against him, considered him a superb bat, quoting in support centuries against Kent and Yorkshire, and a drive for seven (all run) in a match at Canterbury in 1853. The simple wags of his day used to call him "the drawing-room player" because he favoured the draw, the obsolete stroke played between the legs which was then important enough to form one of the series of drawings of the game by G. F. Watts.

John Wisden not only started the *Almanac:* he was also (according to Sir Spencer Ponsonby Fane) the first player to appear in a straw hat instead of a white topper.

Well as he served cricket his great deeds have melted away now, except in the dustiest pages of the record books; but his *Almanac* lives on. It began as quite a modest affair, published at a shilling and simply recording in 112 pages the scores of the leading matches. Within 22 years it had more than trebled in size and cost 2d. more per copy. (The 1s. 3d. charged for a post free copy in those days was the price of postage on your 22s. 6d. copy of nearly 1,200 pages of to-day.)

Perhaps the main reasons for its perpetual success have been the sober excellence of its reporting, its amazing accuracy and—above all—the calibre of a succession of great editors. There was Sydney Pardon, greatest of the lot, who worked on *Wisden* from 1887 to 1925. He watched the game at Lord's through the tiny ivory opera glasses which he also used in the stalls at Covent Garden, his other spiritual home. There was Charles Stewart Caine, who gave 47 years' service to the *Almanac*. S. J. Southerton, who worked with it for 42 years; and Hubert Preston whose service totalled 57 years.

They were all men of character and resolute opinion. Under their leadership the *Almanac*, although as conservative a symbol as the Albert Memorial has never shown any trace of apathy. The tradition has always been to support what is best in cricket and to attack fearlessly what is deemed to be detrimental to the game. S. J. Southerton's assault on Bodyline exemplifies this attitude: he was attacking it with all his weight a few minutes before he fell dead at a dinner at the Oval.

To-day's editor, Norman Preston, has been in the chair since 1951. He has brought into the *Almanac* the feature on League Cricket, and has spoken his mind on the subject of bad play, which he considers one of the blemishes of modern cricket. "How would you get rid of it?" I asked him. "That is up to the legislators," he replied with statesmanlike finality. Under his hands the *Almanac* has increased in size and has maintained its popularity.

The peak year of *Wisden's* popularity was 1949, when 32,000 copies were sold. "I think the great sales in those days were due to national affluence, full employment, the large number of people free to watch the game—and good weather."

He welcomes this season's experiment with the Knock Out Competition, because "it will bring a much needed variety into the game. It won't, however, *save* cricket as some people have suggested—the F.A. Cup hasn't saved football." He himself feels that five-day Tests add nothing to the game. If only we could return to the three-day Test Match!

He lends a sympathetic ear to the suggestion that we should return to the old law allowing bowlers only one ball per innings—Tom Richardson never in his life had a new ball in mid-innings to give him fresh inspiration. "It would certainly encourage leg spinners," he admits almost wistfully.

There are, in this irreverent age, iconoclasts who would like to see changes: even in *Wisden*. One often recommended is the inclusion of scores and reports of touring teams of the previous winter: you will have to wait for *Wisden*, 1964, to read about the doings of Dexter's team that sailed to Australia in 1962. But the machinery cannot be speeded up: it would mean postponing publication till after the start of the summer. "Moreover," the editor points out, "there's the question of queries over scores and bowling analyses. Long after the tour is over, these continue to come in." It takes time to sort them out, remembering that what is at last printed in the *Almanac* has the finality of Holy Writ.

It would indeed take temerity to believe that one had succeeded with a constructive plan to improve *Wisden*—I can only claim to have done my best. The feature *Cricketers of the Year* first appeared in 1889: in recent issues the number of cricketers given this accolade has been stabilised at five. I put it to the editor that the title of this feature, the most popular in *Wisden*, is a complete misnomer. The players named are not the five best players of the year: they are the five players who have not previously been picked for this honour but who have been outstanding during the past *English* season. In 1906 George Hirst performed the unique cricketers' double, scoring over 2,000 runs and taking more than 200 wickets. He may have proved himself that season the greatest all-round cricketer of all time—but he certainly wasn't one of the Cricketers of the Year, because he had been picked in 1901.

Moreover, overseas players can only get into the list on the strength of a performance in an English season. Neither Kanhai, who has scored two centuries in a Test against Australia, nor Sobers, maker of the highest score in a Test, has appeared there. I suggested to Norman Preston that the choice of players should at least be expanded to include cricketers of all nationalities who have been outstanding anywhere during the past season. He was constrained to admit that perhaps in the future, after some summer in which English form had been particularly meagre, such an innovation was a distinct possibility. I felt like a man who had re-drafted the Constitution on the back of an envelope.

ARTIST OF THE CHINA COAST

Above: Portrait of Miss Marchbanks of Bushey, by George Chinnery. Her father spent many years of his life in Canton and Macao. (Reproduced from the private collection of J. R. Jones, Esq., Hong Kong). Macao was the centre for foreign merchants who were permitted into Canton only for the October-May trading period. Thus for half the year Chinnery's sitters tended to be wealthy merchants. For the remaining six months he depicted the lives of the other classes

Top right: The portrait of William C. Hunter, an American, is one of the few Chinnery paintings to carry his signature. It is barely decipherable on the right at the back of the chair. (Reproduced from the private collection of J. R. Jones, Esq., Hong Kong)

Centre, right: Madame Pera and her children. This is one of the many works painted in Macao

Right: A painting of a Chinese Lady at first attributed to Chinnery but discovered to be forged. Chinnery had numerous imitators and forgeries purporting to be his work are frequently found

When George Chinnery died in 1852 he had spent fifty years of his life in the Far East, for most of the time in Macao where he is buried. His work as an artist gives a fascinating insight into life on the south China coast in the first half of the nineteenth century. His genius is now recognised in such places as Hong Kong where the Government and private companies have Chinnery collections.

He was born in London in 1774 and was an artistic prodigy, holding his first exhibition there before he was 21. Soon afterwards he settled in Dublin where he was elected a member of the Royal Hibernian Society. A miserably unhappy marriage set him off on his travels, to get away from his wife. In India he established himself as a portraitist with members of the East India Company. But his wife caught up with him in Madras. He remained with her for seven more years. Then he fled again, to Macao and Canton. No foreign women were allowed in Canton.

Left: A view of the Praya Grande in the Portuguese port of Macao as the artist knew it in the 1830s

Below: Storm on a Chinese River. Attributed to Chinnery it is one of two paintings of the scene owned by the Hong Kong government. The other is in his style but the artist is not known

A RUSH OF WIGS TO THE HEAD

by Primrose Rostron

This year seductive wigs have been displayed in West End shops. They cost £50 and upwards for real hair, and rather less for nylon, raffia or yak. Beautiful Dianas pour out tea in them after hunting, and at Hunt Balls, familiar mousey heads are transformed into exotic topknots. They attract the modern male, as Cleopatra fascinated Mark Antony long ago beside the Nile with a peruke of indigo and silver combs.

Egyptians of all classes wore wigs. The rich set their real curls with bitumen, while the poor made do with cotton. Royal concubines were distinguished by a gold circlet. At banquets, slaves crowned the head of each guest with a cake of scented wax lying on a lotus blossom. These human candles smelt delicious, cracking the carapaces of fried locusts, or munching slices of date cake. Grey hair was kept at bay, by a mixture of:

Paw of dog—one part.
Kernel of date—one part.
Hoof of donkey—one part.

Cook these ingredients in an earthen pot and anoint the head.

Wigs were first mentioned in England, in the 1529 Privy Purse Accounts of Henry VIII. "Item: for a periwig for Sexton, the King's Fool, 20/-." Queen Elizabeth had cupboards filled with auburn and golden wigs. Court ladies copied her by wearing an "attire" usually dyed red or yellow.

"Her hair is auburn, mine is perfect yellow,
If that be all the difference in our love,
I'll get me such a colour'd periwig. . . . ."

—Shakespeare in *Two Gentlemen of Verona.*

Large perukes became fashionable for men in European Society about 1620, after the Abbé de la Rivière had appeared at the Court of Louis XIII in a periwig of long fair hair. A few years later, the King went bald and adopted this fashion. Half a century later, his successor, Louis XIV only allowed Binette, his barber, to see him without his white scented periwig. It was handed through the curtains of the royal four-poster night and morning. The Court of Versailles set the fashion and the English upper classes took to wigs after the Restoration. In November, 1663, Pepys heard the Duke of York say that "he was going to wear a periwig, and they say the King will—he is mighty grey." The next day, Pepys sent for his barber, Chapman, who "cut off my hair . . . put my periwig on, and I paid him £3 for it, and away he went with my own hair to make up another." Later, the Duke of York remarked, that "Mr. Pepys was so altered with his new periwig I did not know him." The diarist's happiness was complete!

During the Plague, the nervous started rumours that wigs were made from the hair of the victims. By James II's reign, the heavy peruke hung down like a shawl over men's shoulders, sometimes tied back with a bow. Great quantities of horse hair were imported from Germany, which upset the French balance of payments, so Colbert, the Finance Minister tried to suppress wig-making altogether.

An 18th century print entitled *A Morning Ramble or The Milliner's Shop.* From the British Museum

Perukes and periwigs

By Dutch William's time, men smoked their Gouda pipes in elegant dressing gowns, or discussed the Bourse at Amsterdam; while their barbers curled their enormous perukes with clay pipes. These bilbouquets, or roulettes were the forerunners of the permanent wave. When the barbers had finished, the wigs were replaced, and the wearer pressed his face into a cone to be dusted with scented powder. Every gentleman's house had its powder closet. Curling liquids were much discussed and the tricorne hat was in.

"A periwig to a man should be like a vizard to a woman, nothing should be seen but the eyes," remarked Lord Foppington, in Vanbrugh's play, *The Relapse.* In coffee house, drawing-room or theatre, the Philanders and Strephons of Queen Anne's England admired their reflections in spunking glasses, and arranged their dishevelled locks with tortoise-shell combs.

"But as when vizard mask appears in pit,
Straight every man, thinks himself a wit,
Perks up, and managing his comb with grace,
With his white wig sets off a nut brown face. . . ."

wrote Dryden. Racing men favoured a neat black wig beneath the jockey cap.

Wigs were passed from father to son until they reached the second hand shops in Monmouth Street. In Rosemary Lane, there was a famous lottery, where for the price of 6d. the impecunious dipped into a tub and pulled out a wig. Most periwigs ended up in a boot black's box, as they added an excellent shine to pattens and red-heeled shoes.

In Hogarth's England wigs were priced by colour. Thomas Astley, "who sells for ready

money can provide the Lightest Colour'd Human Hair Tye Peruke for £4. The next Colour £3 : 10s. and so in Proportion to the Colour down to £2." Dark grizel tyes and horse hair tyes cost 30/-. Grey wigs came in with the eighteenth century. Shoppers had a great variety of choice. They could select a boar's head, a rhinoceros, a pigeon's wing, or for those fond of gardens, there was a cauliflower, a spinach seed, or a rose. The frivolous chose a natty scratch.

Men in the professions bought grey wigs of real hair costing 4 gns. Physicians fancied three-tailed models. Fielding, the novelist, wrote, unkindly, that "the physician can no more prescribe without a wig than without a fee." Oxford undergraduates paid one guinea for a wig with a foretop to fit their mortar boards, and bag wigs were much favoured by the army.

Ramillies tails and topknots

After Marlborough's victory, a Ramillies tail became the fashion. It was tied by a great bow at the top, and a small one at the end. For the marriage of the Prince of Wales (Poor Fred), in 1736, the officers of the horse and foot guards wore Ramillies periwigs by royal command. Soldiers were issued with a weekly ration of one pound of flour. Officers needed two pounds for each dressing. In those days when bull was bull, military periwigs were kept tidy with heavy iron combs. One admiral fined his servants threepence, for leaving powder or pomatum in the servants hall.

By George III's accession masculine heads were smaller. The exceptions were the Macaronies, rich young men, who ate luxuriously and dressed extravagantly. They minced down St. James's Street, their hair tied in a topknot with a chignon behind. On the top perched a Nivernois hat, which they raised on their canes to greet their friends.

In 1764, Horace Walpole mentioned that their club in Pall Mall "was composed of all the travelled young men in long curls and spying glasses." Here they ate macaroni. Nine years later, when London had grown tired of their affectations, Walpole again commented, "I was in London yesterday and there was scarce a soul, but the Macaronis lolling out of a window at Almacks like carpets to be dusted." In those days, an expedition to a milliner must have taken all morning. and a visit to a dentist just as nerve wracking as to-day.

Horsehair and scratching sticks

After the Seven Years War, French hairdressers flocked to London, and the rich visited Paris. The era of the enormous women's headdresses had arrived. As masculine heads came down, their wives' and daughters' went up. Doorways were heightened, and the roofs of sedan chairs were hinged. The hairdressers were flourishing and had trade cards printed.

The fantastic feminine creations began with a foundation of horsehair, hemp, wool and powder put on with a paste. When the edifice was built up, it was topped with a set piece.

Another print of the same period—*Docking the Macaroni*—by courtesy of the British Museum

Customers could choose flower beds, orchards, vegetable gardens, a coach and horses, an aviary or, if nautically inclined, there were ships and shell motifs. Cleaning was a problem. In summer, the headdresses had to be opened every three weeks, for mice and vermin nestled cosily inside.

Scratching sticks were much in demand. The impecunious made do with horn, while their richer sisters preferred ivory with jewelled handles. Sleeping was difficult, as the wearer had to doze with her neck on a wooden rest. Wig snatching was a most lucrative pursuit, many ruses were employed. Coloured powder became the rage. Fashionable women had the coats of their pet dogs dusted blue or red to match their own heads.

Kaunitz, Maria Theresa's War Minister, arranged for his servants to throw pink, white, yellow and blue powder at his head as he walked to and fro. Then, resembling a rainbow, he strolled beneath the chandeliers of the Hofburg, accompanied by a huge bulldog, to meet his Sovereign. Queen Charlotte's Birthday Ball was held every year at St. James's Palace, where to the strains of the March from Handel's *Judas Maccabaeus*, the debutantes were presented. In 1786, the Ball was opened by the Prince of Wales and his eldest sister. Guests took much trouble over their looks.

Pitt's powder tax of 1795 killed the wearing of wigs and powder in England. Any who paid the annual tax of one guinea were called guinea pigs. In the next century, William IV told Bishop Blomfield, "Don't wear the wig on my account. I dislike the wig and would be pleased to see the whole bench of bishops wear their own hair." So Blomfield gave it up, and the others followed suit, until the entire Episcopal Bench was wigless.

DONE IN HAIR STITCH

Most needlework pictures are embroidered in silk, fine wool or linen on an ordinary silk or linen base. The three rare examples shown here are stitched in hair on to a silk base, though some of the solid lines appear to be of fine silk. They are possibly copies of prints or pen and ink drawings in the style of Morland. The heyday of this art, practised by gentlewomen with plenty of time was in the 18th and early 19th centuries. These examples belong to Mrs. Barnato-Walker, granddaughter of the diamond millionaire Barney Barnato.—

JOHN BIGNELL

THE COVENTRY WEAVER

by Cyril J. Scott, FMA, *Museums Curator, Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Coventry*

Thomas Stevens was born at Foleshill, then a village on the outskirts of Coventry, in 1828. Now a part of Coventry, Foleshill was even at that time an important centre of the silk ribbon weaving industry, and a large proportion of its inhabitants were engaged, in their own homes, in the production of ribbons for the city's manufacturers.

Stevens, one of a large and not very prosperous family, appears to have learned the weaver's art without any formal apprenticeship. At least, no record of his indentures remains, nor is he known to have been admitted as a freeman of the city, a step which would have followed. As a youth he worked for a Coventry weaving firm, Messrs. Pears and Franklin of Upper Well Street, and by 1854 he had prospered sufficiently to set up his own business in Queen Street.

Though his first productions were the normal plain and fancy ribbons, he was interested in the Jacquard loom, a French invention which had been introduced to Coventry about thirty years earlier. This device was controlled by a series of cards, punched with holes, whose arrangement dictated the pattern to be produced. The preparation of the necessary drawings on squared paper, and their transfer in the form of punched holes to the cards was a highly skilled task—more than 400 cards might be required for an inch of ribbon, and alignment had to be perfect—but when they were complete they could be used time and again to give as many repeat copies as might be needed. Even more important, they could be used to produce work of a complexity far too great to be contemplated economically by the old hand methods.

Stevens used the Jacquard loom to produce not only complicated designs, but actual pictures, and it is these which keep his fame alive, though he died in 1888, and his factory disappeared in the Blitz of 1940.

Despite the growing watch-making trade, and the competition of foreign ribbons, silk weaving was, in the 1850's, the support of the majority of Coventry's inhabitants, and indeed also of many in the surrounding villages. Nevertheless, its prosperity, dependent as it was on women's fashion, was uncertain, and the Anglo-French treaty of 1860, which removed the duties on French ribbons, brought about the collapse of the trade.

The unemployment and distress which followed led to the introduction of new industries—sewing machines, bicycles—and eventually to a new prosperity, but that is another story.

Thomas Stevens sought to turn his own and his workers' existing skills into new channels, and in 1862 he marketed the first of his silk bookmarkers. These, with designs and verses to suit every occasion and at prices to suit every pocket were a great success. A new factory was acquired in West Orchard, and a warehouse in Much Park Street. Even these new premises were soon outgrown and, in 1875, the Stevengraph Works were built in Cox Street. The name Stevengraph was henceforth employed to identify productions of Thomas Stevens.

Branch offices were opened and agents appointed in many parts of the world, but perhaps the most interesting of Stevens' methods of publicising his wares were the looms set up in the great exhibitions both in this country and overseas at which the visitor could watch his Stevengraph being woven, before buying.

As time went on, Stevens added to his range. Valentines, scent sachets, Naval hat bands woven in gold wire, along with badges and sashes for members of clubs and Friendly Societies all provided work for his looms, and in 1879 his new series of silk pictures was introduced. The stagecoach of "The Good Old Days" and the railway train of "The Present Time" were the predecessors of a long line of pictures stretching down to the coronation of King George V in 1910. The subjects used were many and varied—rulers and their consorts—politicians—sportsmen—sporting scenes—historical scenes—mythology—local views. At 6d. or 1s. each, with a glazed frame for another 6d., who could resist them? Collectors are still fascinated by them at many times their original price.

Production of these pictures ceased about the time of the Great War. It is said that the Jacquard cards were destroyed in a fire, and though old stocks were still available in the early twenties, the cards were not replaced, and no more were made. New pictures, produced after this are much larger and have not the delicacy of their predecessors. The firm continued to flourish, depending, no doubt, on its more bread and butter work, principally woven labels—an industry still important in Coventry though the Stevens

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"Called to the Rescue: Heroism at Sea." This silk picture shows a boat with ten oars and a sinking ship

"Phoebus and Aurora." This uncommon work by Thomas Stevens has only recently come to light

"The Death of Nelson." This and its companion piece "Wellington and Blucher" are highly complex

Right : Queen Victoria—a bookmark dating from the 1860's

THE COVENTRY WEAVER

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Company left the city after the Stevengraph factory was destroyed in the air-raids of 1940.

In its new home, at Leek in Staffordshire, the firm still produces an occasional silk picture for publicity purposes. Other firms in Coventry have recently revived the old art to commemorate the consecration of the New Cathedral. Woven badges, too, are still made, but the old Stevengraph has disappeared from public view, only being found in the antique shops and in the collection on view in the City's Museum.

The writer wishes to acknowledge the help of Miss Alice Lynes, of the Coventry and Warwickshire Collection of the Coventry City Libraries, whose pamphlet "Thomas Stevens and his Silk Ribbon Pictures" is obtainable from the library. "The Silk Pictures of Thomas Stevens" by Wilma Sinclair LeVan Baker, Exposition Press, New York, is also a mine of information on Stevens.

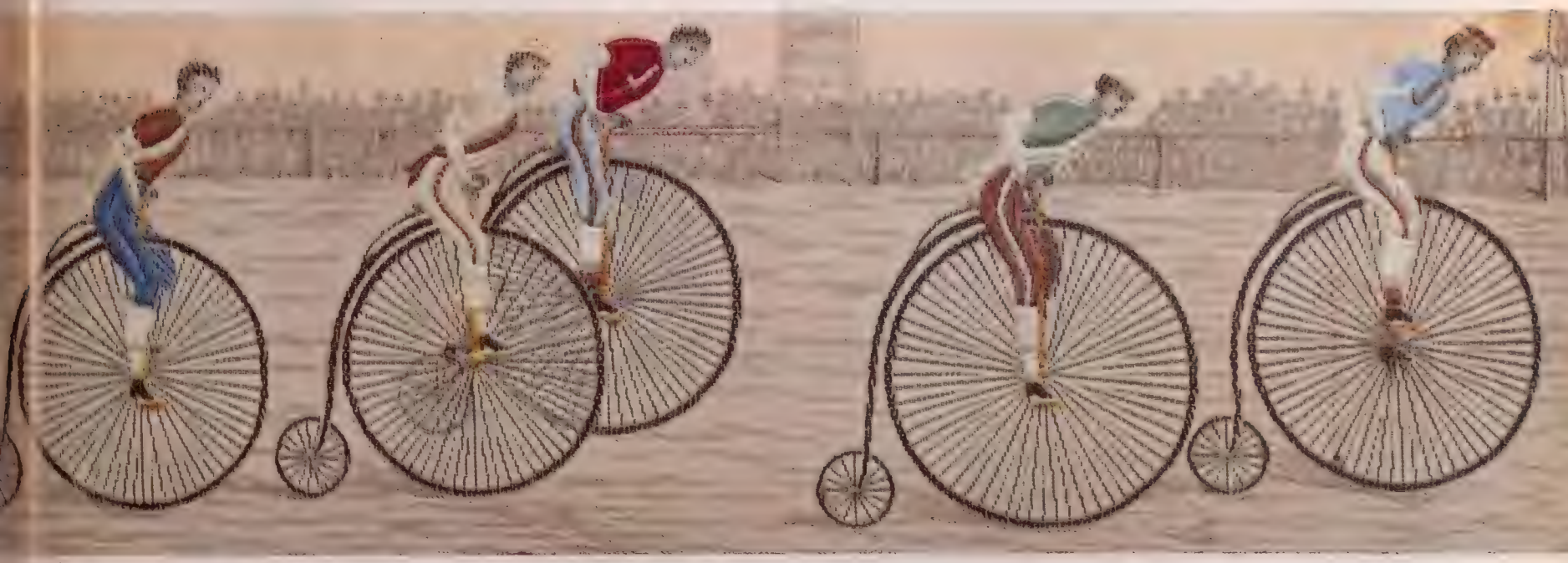
"For Life or Death—Heroism on Land." This is one of two pictures with this title. It shows a steam fire engine

"The Declaration of Independence"—woven at Chicago Exposition of 1893

Another bookmark from the 1860's. This one is entitled "The First Train"

From a private collection

The Good Old Days



The Last Lap

The Lady Godiva Procession

These illustrations of earlier forms of transport in London will arouse nostalgia in the older generations who have known what it is to ride upon an open-top bus or even to regard the horse as the normal form of traction. At the top are a three-horse bus of the period 1856-58 and a "knife board" of about the same time. At the right is a London General Omnibus Co's Maskelyne Check for the benefit of passengers and staff. In the centre row we come to the age of the motor with an Orion of 1904, one of the famous "B" types of 1910 and, not forgetting another means of traction, an early electric tram. Finally we have covered top vehicles. A tram of 1924 and a London General Omnibus of a year later. In between them is a real collector's piece, a steam bus of 1902.

OLD BUSES AND TRAMS OF LONDON

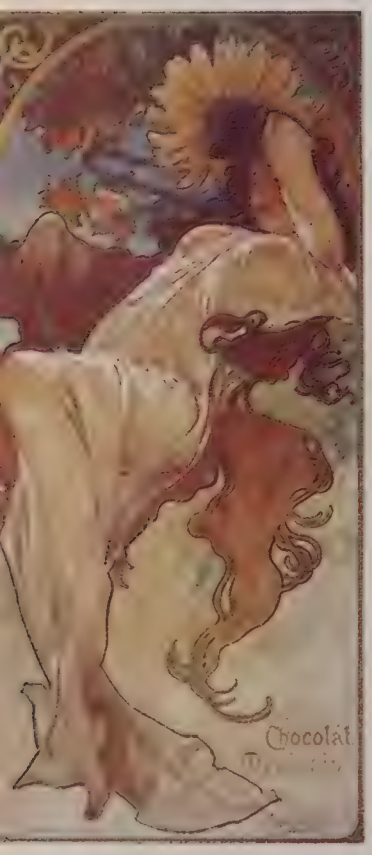
Illustrated by John Finnie

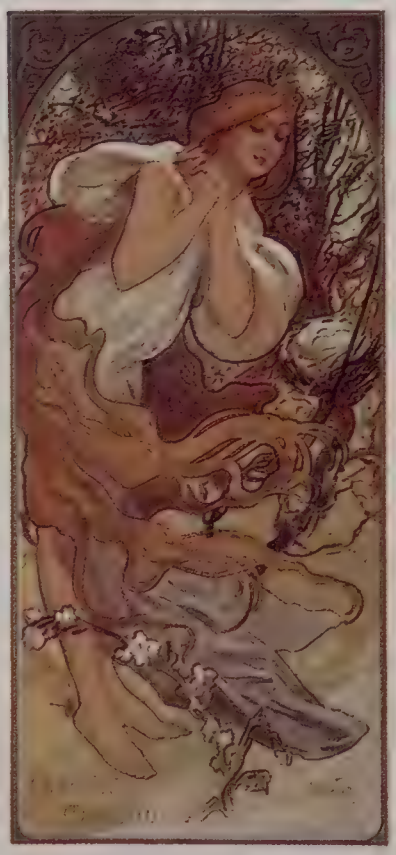
SYMBOLISM IN POSTERS

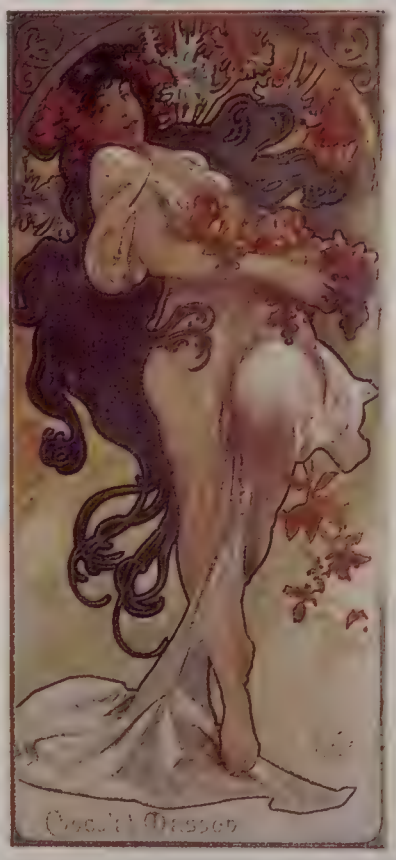
Art Nouveau was the name given to somewhat self-conscious efforts to create a new style in the decorative arts from the 1890s until the beginning of the First World War. It received considerable publicity at the International Exhibition in Paris in 1900. Among the chief exponents of this style was Alphonse Mucha, who was born in Moravia in 1860 and died in Prague in 1939. An exhibition of his work was seen at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London last summer and the photographs on these pages were taken there.

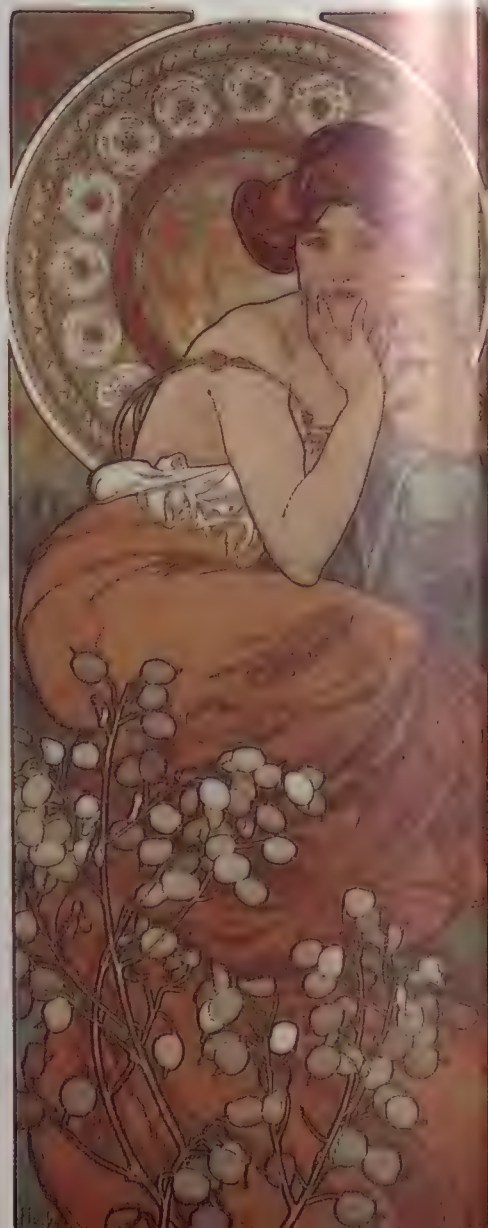
Mucha concluded his training as an illustrator in Paris and his great chance came in 1894 when he was asked to design a poster for a play in which Sarah Bernhardt was appearing. It is said that the "Divine Sarah" inspired his ideal of the female form which he presented so often.

In the stricter sense, Mucha was never a member of any art movement, but his conventions were those of a symbolist. In the early years of this century he tired of *Art Nouveau* and devoted his time to vast canvases illustrating Slav history. After 1918 he lived in Prague and designed bank-notes and stamps for his native country.









Top: "Autumn Decoration" a panel owned by Mr. Jiří Mucha

Above: Three panels from a calendar issued by Chocolat Masson. From the Citroen Collection, Amsterdam

Right: "La Topaze." From a series of decorative panels allegorising precious stones. Owned by Mr. Jiří Mucha

Brooch executed by Georges Fouquet after a design by Alphonse Mucha. From the Citroen Collection, Amsterdam

Above: "Les Fleurs," owned by Mr. Jiří Mucha

Plaque with decoration after a design by Alphonse Mucha. Colour enamel over transfer-printed black outlines over white-glazed earthenware. Owned by Mr. Mario Amaya

ARRANGEMENTS FOR FLOWERS

painted by Lucien Lowen

Cornflowers and Poppies

Continued on P. 50

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FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS *(continued from page 48)*

Lucien Lowen is deeply interested in the shapes and colours of flowers. On the earlier page he has shown how poppies can underline the sweep of the ears of corn. On this page he has four studies. Left: Tulips in a jug and below: tulips and carnations. The artist's flower arrangements are not drawn in the ordinary sense of "still life." He does not arrange his flowers and then draw them. He uses his imagination and then creates paintings which are based for the most part on simple geometrical forms

Above: Poinsettia is a popular winter-flowering shrub for the greenhouse. With its oval-elliptical leaves and small greenish-yellow flowers, it is noted among decorative plants

Left: A vase of carnations with other objects on a chequered table

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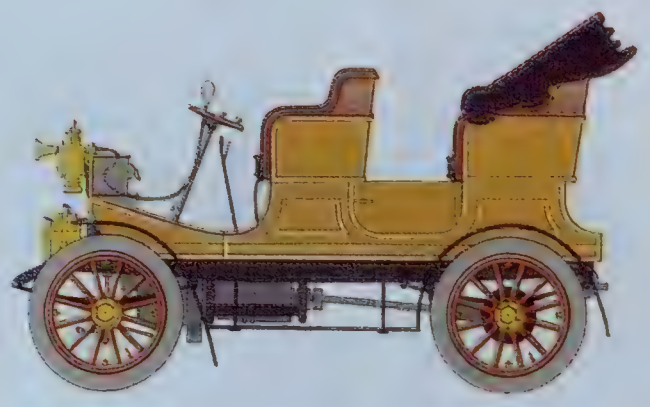

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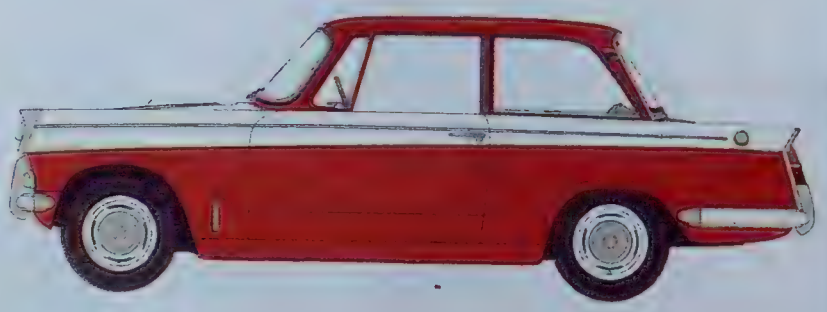

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FAIR TRAQUAIR

Written and photographed by Alasdair Alpin MacGregor

An' what saw ye there,
At the bush aboon Traquair?
Or what did ye hear that was worth yer heed?
I heard the cushies croon
Thro' the gowden aifternoon,
An' the Quair burn singin' doun tae the Vale o' Tweed.

Though there are many ways in which one might have been brought into contact with the enchanting name of Traquair, my own first knowledge of it came through my acquaintance with Principal Shairp's version of the ballad, *The Bush aboon Traquair*. The lines quoted are those of the third of its eight verses. Their inclusion, together with Sir Harold Boulton's musical arrangement of them, in the first volume of *The Songs of the North*, published by J. W. Cramer & Co. some sixty years ago, certainly bestowed upon this Peeblesshire parish and village an assured place in the literature and minstrelsy of Scotland. Shairp, by the way, was once Principal of Glasgow University.

Earlier writers also did something to perpetuate in literature the fair name of Traquair, among them, James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, who, in his inquiries into local *diablerie*, permitted Colin Hyslop, the hero of *The Witches of Traquair*, to have his mischievous practices stimulated by the Warlock, Rob Kirkwood, and by Nana, Rob's aunt, "the wickedest witch in Cristendye." Between them, in their endeavour to have Colin sign a pact with Satan, they transformed him into a goose, into a fox, and into a three-legged stool.

Above: The courtyard front of Traquair House, unaltered since 1664, is often quoted as an example of the Scottish version of a French Manor-house

Left: The House seen from the garden showing the terraces and pavilion which were added in 1664

What may well be a description of Traquair House, one of the finest and most picturesquely situated of early Scottish mansions, is that which Sir Walter Scott provides in *Waverley* of Tully-Veolan, the castle of the Baron Bradwardine. This Traquair locality Scott must have known intimately, since it lies but a few miles west of Ashiestiel, the house by the Tweed where he took up residence in 1804, while sheriff-deputy of Selkirkshire. He wrote *Waverley* while at Ashiestiel. The resemblance his Tully-Veolan bears to Traquair House seems too close to have been accidental.

Traquair House is one of the oldest inhabited residences in Scotland. The earliest reference to it of which I know carries us back to the opening years of the twelfth century, when Alexander the First of Scotland stayed there while hunting in Ettrick Forest; but it is claimed that some sort of fortified place occupied at least part of its present site three centuries before that. Doubtless, the ancient peel-tower, located at its north-east corner, formed the nucleus of the house we know to-day.

It was from Traquair that William the Lion, in 1176, granted to Bishop Jocelyn the charter that led to the founding of Glasgow. William held court here in 1209; and Mary of Scotland and Darnley stayed here three-and-a-half centuries later. The apartments in the original house, where Darnley treated Mary so discourteously that their host reproved him, are still in existence. But it was not until the opening decades of the seventeenth century, under the auspices of the first Earl of Traquair, that the house began to assume anything of its

(Continued on page 56)

FAIR TRAQUAIR *Continued from page 55*

Above: Traquair Water near Traquair House with the slopes of Minchmair in the background

Right: A skull and crossbones on a tombstone in the kirkyard of Traquair Parish

Far Right: An external staircase at the end of Traquair kirk gives access to the Laird's Loft

present appearance and magnificence. Its main blocks date from about 1642: its low wings, terraces, and so on were added later in the same century. Its courtyard front remains to-day as it was in 1664, the year of its completion. By the close of the seventeenth century Traquair House had become a splendid example of the Scottish version of a French manor-house.

Though in former times the Traquair estate had known a succession of owners, by the close of the fifteenth century it was truly in possession of the Stuart family.

As early as 1740, associations of Jacobite partisans in Scotland had already been formed with a view to taking up arms on behalf of the exiled Bonnie Prince Charlie's claim to the throne, contingent upon the assurance of competent help from abroad.

The Stuarts' connection with Traquair continued unbroken until the death in 1875, of Lady Louisa Stuart, sister of the eighth and last Earl of Traquair, who had predeceased her. The estate then passed by will to Henry Constable Maxwell, who now added the name of Stuart to his own. Hence the present owner of Traquair House is a Maxwell-Stuart.

This picturesque pile is seen at its loveliest from some adjacent spot where, in the golden afternoon (to quote Principal Shairp again) the Quair burn goes singing down to the Vale of Tweed.

No more than half a mile from Traquair village, by the Paddy Slacks road running south toward no less romantic Yarrow, are Traquair's kirk and kirkyard. An external stone stair at the kirk's east end gives access to the Laird's Loft. This extends over roughly a third of the pews at the rear of the church. Adjoining its north wall is the aisle within which, as a tablet testifies, "lie the mortal remains of the noble and ancient House of Stuart, Earls of Traquair."

But where, exactly, was the trysting-place by the Quair Water immortalised in Principal's Shairp's ballad? Where grew that particular specimen of vegetation which *The Bush aboon Traquair* perpetuates in song?

At no distance from the kirk and the Quair Water, the Paddy Slacks road divests itself of a branch leading in the direction of The Glen, an early home of the first Countess of Oxford and Asquith. In the valley nearby lies the farmhouse of Orchard Mains. Beyond, and on the Quair's opposite bank, a clump of trees, identified by a few tall birches, marks the spot where once flourished that bush of romance.

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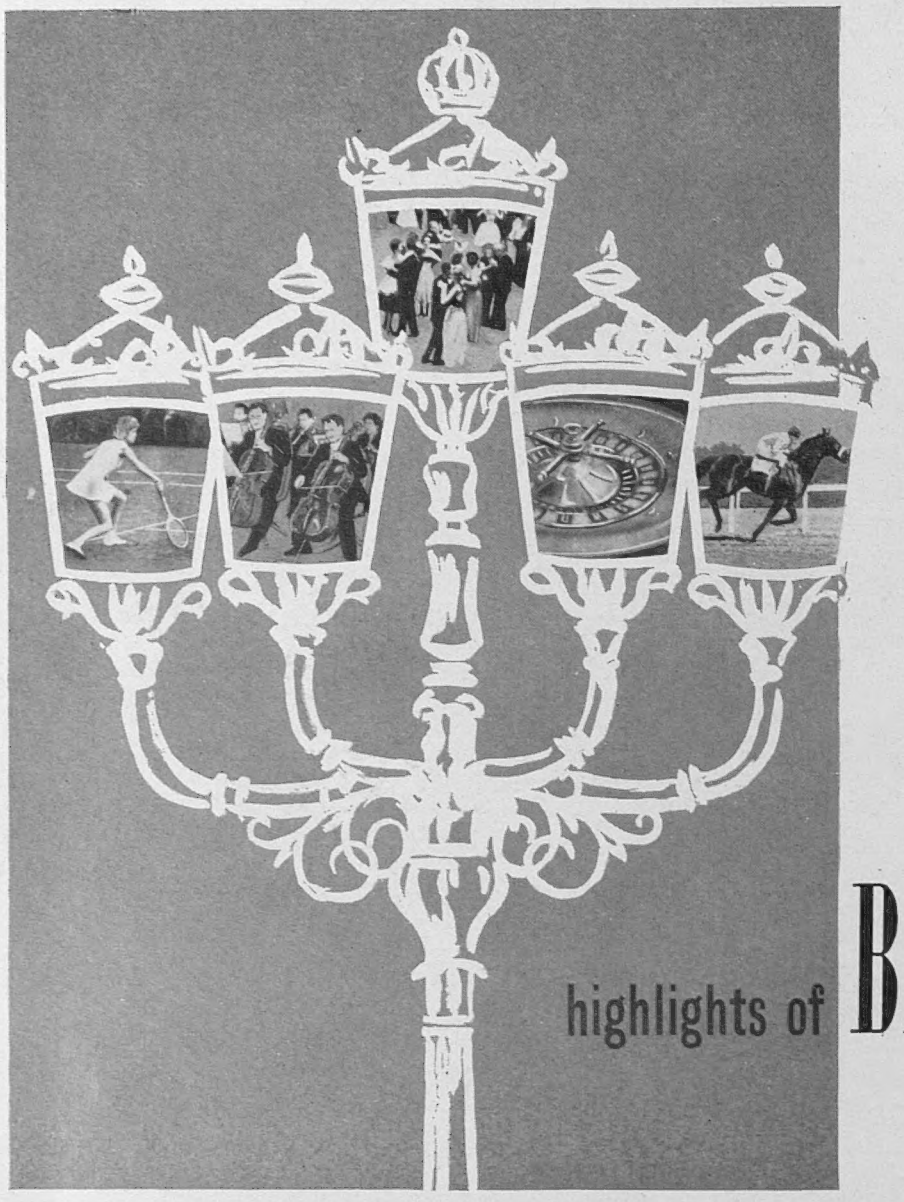

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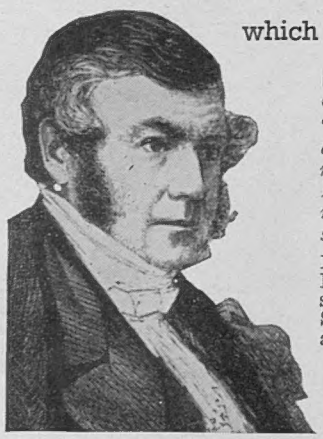

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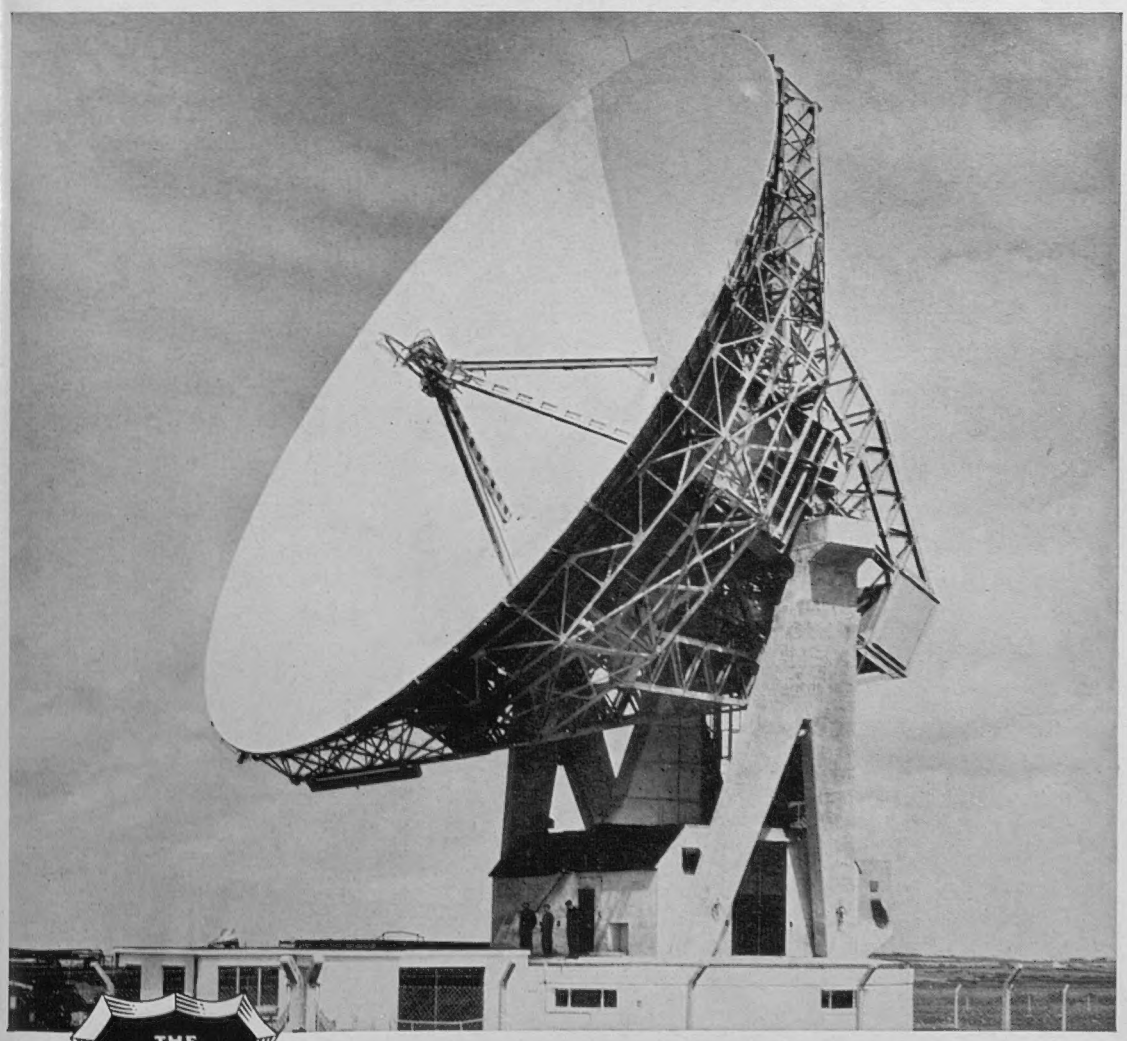

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